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PHILIP HENRY'S EXPOSITION.



AN
EXPOSITION,
WITH PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS,
UPON THE
FIRST ELEVEN CHAPTERS
OF THE BOOK OF
GENESIS.

BY PHILIP HENRY, M.A.,
FORMERLY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD.

"ADORO PLENITUDINEM SCRIPTURARUM."
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MDCCCXXXIX.



P R E F A C E.

THE manuscript from which the following little work is taken, is in the handwriting of MATTHEW HENRY, and is dated in 1682, at which period he was about twenty years old. Those who are acquainted with the style of PHILIP HENRY, will see the clearest traces of it in every page,—almost in every sentence.

IN MATTHEW HENRY's interesting life of his father, it is stated that the latter always expounded the portion of scripture which he read in his family, and made it a part of the employment of his children, while they were with him, to

write those expositions. And it is added, that the collections thus formed by the children of that good man in their younger days, were afterwards of great use to them and their families.

There are very satisfactory reasons for believing that the manuscript from which the following pages are taken, forms one of the expositions of PHILIP HENRY, written by his son under these circumstances.

Having, as a descendant of the writer, become possessed of it, I have at different times submitted it to the perusal of several judicious persons ; and it is in consequence of their concurrent and strong recommendation that it is now made public. Independent of its intrinsic excellence, it cannot but be regarded with interest, from the consideration that by this and other similar productions of PHILIP HENRY, was probably first sug-

gested to his son the idea of writing the Commentary which bears his name ; a Commentary,—to say the least of it,—as useful as any which has yet been submitted to the Christian world.

Perhaps no person is so well acquainted with the writings,—certainly no one has done such ample justice to the characters, of PHILIP and MATTHEW HENRY, as SIR JOHN BICKERTON WILLIAMS. He informs us that the latter, in writing his Exposition, made a full, though judicious, use of the admirable papers of his father ; very properly adding, that the circumstance should by no means be “regarded as derogatory to the venerated Commentator.”

This work having been originally intended only for the private use of a family circle, I have taken upon me the responsibility of making some retrenchments ; conceiving it probable that the

author would himself have done so, had he printed it for general circulation.

“The Bible,” says the excellent CECIL, “resembles an extensive and highly-cultivated garden, where there are a vast variety and profusion of fruits and flowers, some of which are more essential or more splendid than others ; but there is not a blade suffered to grow in it, which has not its use and beauty in the system.” As it was the object of my pious forefather in composing, so it is my prayer in publishing, the following interesting elucidation of some of these beauties and excellencies of the sacred volume, that it may be made instrumental in promoting the glory of God, and in setting forth “the unsearchable riches of Christ.”

JOHN LEE.

*Whitchurch, Shropshire,
April 10th, 1838.*

INTRODUCTION.

THERE are two books which the God of heaven hath published for the instruction and edification of the children of men :

1. *The book of the creatures*, in which is written, as with a sun-beam, (so plain that he that runs may read it,) the eternal power and Godhead of him that made them. Ps. xix. 1. Rom. i. 20. Every blade of grass is a letter; every ear of corn a line; every living creature a leaf; the sun, moon, and stars, so many curious embellishments; and all together make up one great volume, which declares the glory of God in all places, and shows his handy-works to all nations; who may truly say of these

natural, immortal preachers, as was said of the apostles, *We do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.* Acts ii. 11.

2. *The book of the Scriptures*, which is written for this very end, to discover to the world, (far more clearly than the former book,) the being, wisdom, power, and goodness, of that God whose Spirit was the inditer, and whose servants were the penmen, of that blessed book, 2 Pet. i. 21; and especially to show forth the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Now the book of the Scriptures begins with a short compendium of the book of the creatures, as they stood in their original. So that that which the Papists say of pictures and images, that they are laymen's (that is, in their account, ignorant men's) books, may more truly be said of the history of the creation, according to that of the royal psalmist, Ps. cxix. 130. *The entrance of thy word giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.*

This book of Genesis was written by Moses, above two thousand four hundred years after the creation; and yet he writes as clearly, particularly, and confidently, as if he himself had been an eyewitness of it;

the Holy Spirit revealing it to him certainly and infallibly. Moses is supposed to have written it in Midian, for the comfort of his brethren who were groaning under Egyptian slavery; and how could he better comfort them, than by assuring them of the promise of God made to their fathers, concerning the mercy he had in store for them, which is several times, and upon several occasions, mentioned in this book?

This book hath its name *Bereshith* in the Hebrew, from the first word of it. It hath its name *Genesis* in the Greek, and in the English, from the first chapter of it; because in it is showed the rise and original of all things, for so *Genesis* signifies. Gen. ii. 4. v. 1.

There's no other book that is or ever was extant in the world, that gives a true account of the history of the creation, besides this, and those that have been borrowed from it; for though the heathens had some dark notions concerning it, yet they could not agree in their conceptions; but talked of it as blind men do of colours, being strangers to this divine revelation.

AN EXPOSITION

OF THE

FIRST ELEVEN CHAPTERS OF GENESIS.

CHAPTER I.

The history of the creation, (which is a matter of no small importance,) is faithfully and honestly, in a majestic style and exact method, delivered to us in the records of this chapter; concerning which we may truly say with the historian, 1 Chron. iv. 22, these are ancient things; even as ancient as time itself; which should engage us to the study of it, and to acquaintance with it; for indeed this is a chapter to be often read with much faith and great thankfulness.

IN the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

Now the history of the creation is delivered to us,

First, in general, ver. 1; and Secondly, in particular, in the rest of the chapter.

I. In general, v. 1. The first words of John's Gospel are the same with the first words of Genesis, *In the beginning*; but they have a far different signification; there they signify, in the beginning of eternity; (if we may so speak, for eternity hath strictly no beginning,) then the *Word* was. Here it signifies in the beginning of time; then the *world* was. Before this beginning, nothing was but Almighty God; even the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, who was from everlasting, Ps. xc. 2; and it is easy to demonstrate by the principles of reason that there must be such a Being. The Chaldee paraphrase renders it, *in wisdom* God created; and it is a great truth that the world was made in infinite wisdom; and so any one that seriously observes the curious method and order of things, must needs confess. Ps. cxxxvi. 5. Prov. iii. 19. Ps. civ. 24.

God created, that is, made out of nothing. None can do that, but he that hath infinite power. Man can make something out of something, but it is one of nature's first principles that (*ex nihilo, nihil fit*,) out of nothing, nothing can be made, viz. by the power of nature in an ordinary way; but out of nothing, something was made by the power of him who, having

his being of himself, gives breath and being to all things.

The heaven and the earth. This is understood three ways :

1. By *heaven* and *earth* are meant all the creatures; by *heaven*, the heaven itself and all the creatures that are in it; and by *earth*, the earth itself and all the creatures that are in it. Acts xvii. 24. Col. i. 16. Afterwards the sacred writer branches these generals into particulars, in order of time; and then by *the beginning* must be meant all the six days, at the end of which it is said, *the heavens and the earth were finished*. Chap. ii. 1.

2. By *heaven* and *earth* others understand that confused heap, out of which the heaven and the earth were afterwards made, and which is called the *deep*, and *waters*; being as it were, the substance, matter, or seed of the whole world.

3. Some by *heaven*, understand the third heavens, (the Empyrean heavens as they are called, from their light,) the seat of the blessed, the habitation of God's holiness, Isa. lxiii. 15, into which St. Paul was rapt. 2 Cor. xii. 2. These God did *in the beginning*, that is, at the very first instant of time, *create*, that is, make perfect, without any pre-existent matter. And that in the next place he replenished these heavens with angels, who were to be the inhabitants of that

glorious place, and who should seem to have been created before the earth; because the angels, (who are commonly understood, by the *morning stars* and the *sons of God*, Job xxxviii. 7,) are said to have *sung together*, and to have *shouted for joy*, when the foundations of the earth were laid. And by the *earth* they understand that chaos or heap of matter which was in the beginning of the first day made imperfect; and out of which all other created things, with their several forms and fulness, even the firmament and visible heavens themselves, were afterwards made and brought forth in order, by the power of God. And perhaps the manner of expression intimates the likelihood of this last interpretation; *the earth was without form and void*, but so was not the heaven, but perfect and complete at first. And as to the lights of heaven, mentioned to be created in v. 14, these belong to the lower, not to the third heavens.

The reasons why God did, (according to this opinion,) create the heaven complete at first, might be, (1.) Because it was to be the place of his more special and peculiar residence, where he would show forth his glory immediately in an inexpressible manner. (2.) Because the heavens, being out of our view, cannot so well be the object of our meditation; and the creation of them is therefore not set down by

piece-meal, as that of the earth is, for the helping of our meditations concerning it.

As to the angels, that they were created within the space of the six days is certain; that they were created on the first day, (these tenants being brought into the house of heaven as soon as it was finished,) is very probable, though some place them on the fourth day, when the lights of heaven were made; but I think without ground. The reason why Moses, (or rather the Spirit of God by Moses,) saith nothing of the creation of the angels may be, (1.) To prevent needless and impertinent enquiries concerning them. (2.) That the Jews might have no superstitious respect to them. (3.) Because he had little to say of them in the subsequent story; his concern lying mainly with mankind, God's covenant with them, and dispensations of Providence towards them.

2 And the earth was without form and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

II. The history of the creation is next delivered to us in particular; for "God would not only give us a general account of the creation, to inform us that he made the world; (since for that end the very first

verse might have sufficed,) but he vouchsafes us by retail the narrative of each day's proceedings; and in the first two chapters of Genesis is pleased to give us nobler hints of natural philosophy, than men are yet perhaps aware of."—BOYLE.

The sacred historian now proceeds to show,

1. How things were before. *The earth*, that is, that which God called earth afterwards, ver. 10, or rather that heap of matter mentioned ver. 1, *was without form and void*. 'Tis an elegant expression in the original; the earth was *tohu* and *bohü*; that is, confusion and emptiness. So these two words are translated Isa. xxxiv. 11, *the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness*; where only, besides this place and Jer. iv. 23, these two words are joined together. The earth was a heap of confusion and a mass of nothingness; *tohu*, empty without inhabitants; *bohü*, empty without ornaments. Plainly thus, deduct from the earth all those things with which it was afterwards endowed and adorned;—imagine this heap of matter without light or warmth, a confused mixture of earth, air, and water; no sun, moon, or stars; no herbs, trees, or fruits; no fish or fowl, no beast or creeping thing; and that is confusion and emptiness; the poet's *chaos*, and (according to some) the philosopher's *materia prima*. Now, out of this confused substance, all the rest of created things were made,

and yet might be said to be created; because this, out of which they were made, was made of nothing; it was (*prorsus inhabilis*) altogether unfit and unlikely to be the matter out of which such a curious fabric as this world should be framed.

This chaos is a proper resemblance of the state of an unconverted sinner. Before the grace of God makes the change, there is nothing but confusion, and every evil work, James iii. 16; and emptiness of every thing truly and really good. The work of grace is therefore called *creation*, there being nothing at all in us inclining us to or disposing us for that blessed work, no more than there was in the earth when it was without form and void, to be made a beautiful world. The same Almighty God that could and did out of this confusion and emptiness, rear such a stately, well-composed building, can easily bring order out of confusion, both public and personal, outward and inward, in his own way and time. He is therefore said to *create* the fruit of the lips, *peace*. Isa. lvii. 19.

The earth was void, and so it still is, in one sense; void of all true comfort and satisfaction, which is to be had in the Creator only, and in no creature.

And darkness was upon the face of the deep. The same which was before called *the earth*, is here called *the deep*, and afterwards *the waters*; which notes, (1.) The vast bulk and greatness of that heap

of matter; the word signifying a bottomless, fathomless depth of waters, Psal. civ. 6. 2 Pet. iii. 5; and (2.) The instability of it. It was fluid and unfixed, without any thing of solidity in it.

2. How and by whom this change was made. (1.) God created,—*Elohim, the strong God*, so this name of God signifies; and certainly it was no less than almighty power that was exerted in the creation of the world. (2.) *The Spirit of God moved*. The word *Ruach*, translated *spirit*, signifies also the wind; and so the Chaldee paraphrase and some of the Rabbins interpret it here, comparing it with Psa. cxlvii. 18, *he causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow*. But this is a corrupt interpretation; for how could wind blow when there was none? By *the Spirit* here is certainly meant the holy Spirit of God. Ps. xxxiii. 6. civ. 30. Job xxvi. 13. xxxiii. 4. Isa. xl. 13.

Moved—Heb. *hovered*, like a hen upon her eggs or chickens;—a low, but significant, comparison. The word is used in that sense, Deut. xxxii. 11, where God compares his care of his people to that of an eagle, which *fluttereth* over her young.

3. The particulars of this change are distinctly delivered, according to the order of the six days; for though God could have made all together with one word's speaking, in a moment, yet he did it orderly

in six days; to teach us not only to take notice of the works of creation in the gross, but to take them in pieces in our meditations, and seriously and distinctly to consider each of them apart, according to the order and series of their creation. There are methods of creation as well as methods of Providence, which it is our duty to acquaint ourselves with, that God may have the glory and praise of all.

3 And God said, Let there be light : and there was light.

(1.) Some by light here understand the angels; but without ground,—for the apostle could not say of them (2 Cor. iv. 6) that they did shine out of darkness. (2.) Others the element of fire; but how could that distinguish night from day, which was the end of this light? (3.) This light might be the substance of the sun, though not endued with the formal perfection of beauty till the fourth day, v. 16; but scattered and confused on the first day, and afterwards gathered together on the fourth day. Just as the heavens, and earth, and waters were at first made all confused; and afterwards the waters were congregated, the earth was made dry land, and the heavens were distinguished from both, and beautified; so it might be as to the light. (4.) Others think this light was an irradiation of the heavens and

earth from God himself, we know not how; and that when the sun, moon, and stars were made, this light was annihilated again, as being no longer useful.

In the new creation, the first thing that God works in the soul in conversion is—light. The soul, by nature, is a dark soul; but when grace comes, light comes; for wherever the Spirit is, he is an enlightening Spirit. This work is easy to almighty power; 'tis but God's saying, Let there be light in such a soul, and there will be light; and though this light be small at first, yet it is growing. Prov. iv. 18.

4 And God saw the light, that *it was* good: and God divided the light from the darkness.

The light certainly is good;—good in itself, and good for the end that it was made for. 'Tis necessary not only to the comfort of life, but even to life itself. What a dismal dungeon would the world be without it!

God divided the light from the darkness. Hitherto there had been nothing but darkness, and now God doth not take it out of the world, because it is in some respects useful; but divided betwixt it and its contrary, allotting part for light, and part for darkness; wherein doth marvellously appear the wisdom of God, particularly in this, that their allotments were

equal; all parts of the world enjoying in the year as much day as night, and as much night as day, counting day and night by the rising and setting of the sun; so that where they have for one half of the year all night and no day, they have for the other half all day and no night. This division which God made between light and darkness, was and continues to be an irreconcilable division. What fellowship hath light with darkness? 2 Cor. vi. 14. None at all: they are directly opposite; for what God hath put asunder, no man can join together. Ps. civ. 20, 22. Gen. viii. 22. And certainly the mutual succession of day and night does plainly manifest the power, wisdom, and goodness of that God that ordered it so. Ps. xix. 2. To that covenant which God hath made of the day and of the night, that neither should lose its share and proportion in time, is the covenant of grace compared, for its firmness and stability. Jer. xxxiii. 20.

5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

God, having distinguished the light and the darkness in their natures, next distinguishes them in their

names. One way to keep up division, (a thing which Christians should abhor the thought of,) is to impose and keep up names of division.

And the evening and the morning were the first day. Here we have both the parts of a natural day; *the evening*, that is, all the night from the setting to the rising of the sun; (though that was not then the meaning) and *the morning*, that is, all the day from the sun-rising to the sun-setting. The evening is put first, because darkness was before light; and this darkness is supposed to last twelve hours, which is the length of the night at the Equinox. For this reason the Jews begin their day at sun-setting, and for the same reason some think we should then begin the sabbath-day; because, say they, the evening and the morning being the first day then, why should not the evening and the morning be the first day, (the Christian sabbath) now? But the resurrection of Christ being early in the morning, and the custom of our country beginning other days at midnight, are satisfactory enough on the other hand.

The first day—Heb. one day. Well, here was one day's work, the making of the light, which was more than all the men on earth, or all the angels in heaven, could do in millions of years. Let us bless God for the light, and make sure a place in the inheritance of the saints in light.

6 And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

7 And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* above the firmament: and it was so.

8 And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

On the second day the firmament was made, concerning which observe, (1.) The decree or command of God concerning it; *let there be a firmament*. By the firmament is meant all that which is between the earth and the third heavens; also the several orbs of heaven, the spheres of the seven planets, and the sphere of the fixed stars. The sphere of the stars is expressly called *the firmament of heaven*, ver. 14, 15. The firmament was made, like the light, by a word's speaking, power going along with that word. Though the English word *firmament* signifies the stability and firmness of it, *for He hath established them for ever*, Ps. cxlviii. 6. Prov. viii.

28; yet the Hebrew word signifies the stretching of it out, (Job xxxviii. 18. Isa. xlii. 5. Jer. x. 12,) as gold or silver is expanded by beating, or as a curtain is stretched when it is drawn out. Ps. civ. 2. Isa. xl. 22. (2.) The place of it, *in the midst of the waters*; that is, to be (part of it at least) the receptacle of those waters that are over our heads. Job xxvi. 8. Ps. cxxxv. 7. (3.) The end of it; *to divide the waters which are under the firmament from the waters which are above the firmament*. What waters are under the firmament we know very well; but as to those waters which are above the firmament we are at a loss. Ps. cxlviii. 4. Some understand by them the watery clouds from which comes the rain, and which the lower region of the air doth divide from us, and is as it were a wall, (though one would think it were but a slender one,) to keep them from overwhelming and burying us. (4.) The making of it. Lest it might seem as if God had only commanded it to be done, and some one else had done it, it is added, *and God made the firmament*; and it is curiously and wonderfully formed, and therefore said to be the work of God's fingers. Psal. viii. 3. Note: What God commands us to do, he himself helps us to do; nay, he works in us both to will and to do, that himself may have all the glory. Isa. xxvi. 12. Philip. ii. 13.

9 And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry *land* appear: and it was so.

10 And God called the dry *land* Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it *was* good.

Upon the third day the sea and the earth were made. *God said, Let the waters under the firmament be gathered together.* This implies that before God said this, the waters did quite cover the earth; and no marvel, for the earth being a much heavier element than the water, must needs lie under it. But that would not do; how would the earth then be a habitation for man? Therefore God gathered the waters together, appointing them to compass the earth like a swaddling band. Job xxxviii. 8, 9, 10, 11. Psal. civ. 6, 7, 8, 9. *Into one place*; that is, into the ocean, which is the seat of the element of water, and may, in a sense, be called one place; though there are some seas (as the Caspian sea) which have not immediate connection with the rest.

Let the dry land appear. When the waters, that before covered the earth, were gathered together from off it, it must needs appear and become

dry. 'Twas for that end that the waters were gathered together, that the dry land might appear.

11 And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, *and* the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed *is* in itself, upon the earth : and it was so.

12 And the earth brought forth grass, *and* herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed *was* in itself, after his kind : and God saw that *it was* good.

13 And the evening and the morning were the third day.

Till the earth was severed from the waters, it was not capable of bringing fruit ; but as soon as ever it was made dry land, it was made fruitful. Note : The earth brought forth fruit before the sun, moon, or stars were made ; to teach us that though God doth ordinarily work by second causes, yet he is not tied up to them. The fruitfulness of the earth doth not necessarily depend upon the influence of the sun ; for the fruits of the earth are a day older than the sun, and depend upon the blessing of God. The sun is not mother, but nurse, to the plants ; therefore,

when the figtree doth not blossom, look beyond the sun.

14 And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:

15 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

On the fourth day were made the sun, moon, and stars, of which the sacred historian speaks in general in these verses, calling them lights. Observe,

1. The place of them; *in the firmament of heaven*. The firmament was made before, and now it was adorned; so that it was, like the earth, not finished at once. Divine wisdom proceeds gradually, as in the work of creation, so also in the work of providence in the world, and of sanctification in particular souls.

2. The use of them. (1.) To divide the day from the night; to distinguish, by their presence or absence, between day and night. (2.) *For signs*; signs of the power, and wisdom, and goodness, of God; or for prognostic signs of the weather, rain,

and snow, and frost. But upon this scripture, to ground a warrant for vain astrological predictions of future contingent events, personal or public, is altogether unreasonable. (3.) *For seasons*; that is, to distinguish and regulate the four quarters of the year,—Spring and Summer, Autumn and Winter; which are ordered according to the course of the sun. Job xxxviii. 31, 32. Ps. civ. 19. The Jewish feasts of Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles, and New Moons, are properly called seasons; and were celebrated according to the motion of the lights of heaven, especially the sun and moon. By them also the husbandman is directed to the seasons of sowing, planting, &c.; in which he may, and doth, observe the lights of heaven. (4.) *For days and years*. All the other parts of time seem to be included in these two; minutes and hours under days; weeks and months under years. The day is measured by the motion of the sun from East to East again, which is twenty-four hours; and the year by the motion of the sun through the twelve signs of the zodiack, which is accomplished in three hundred and sixty-five days, five hours, and about forty-nine minutes. (5.) *To give light upon the earth*; so that these glorious creatures were made, not for themselves, but for the benefit and advantage of mankind.

16 And God made two great lights ; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night : *he made* the stars also.

17 And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth,

18 And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness : and God saw that *it was* good.

19 And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

The lights of heaven are divided into the sun, moon, and stars ; concerning which, Moses speaks not as a philosopher, but as a divine ; his design being, not to teach us the exact knowledge of the stars, their nature, number, magnitude, properties, motions, &c., and so make us astronomers ; but to teach us the wisdom, power, and goodness, of the great God, in the creation of them, and so make us saints. The sun is the greatest of all the lights of heaven, being very many times larger than the earth. But the moon is the least of all, except one,—viz. Mercury, which is seldom seen, being several times

less than the earth. 'Tis therefore asked why it is called here one of the *great lights*? No doubt because to us it seems greater than any besides the sun, being nearer to us than any of them. The moon is also called a *great light*, because it gives to us a far greater light, and has a greater influence upon us, than any of the stars.

20 And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl *that* may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.

That the fishes should be brought forth by the waters is easily understood, water being their proper element and receptacle. But how the fowls should be productions of the water is more difficult to understand. Yet I see no inconvenience, if we say that the same waters which brought forth the fish, brought forth the fowl; and certainly the same almighty power (and it could be no less) that produced fishes out of water, could, if he pleased, produce fowls out of water too; who yet were not designed to be the inhabitants thereof.

21 And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth,

which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good.

22 And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.

23 And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

The whales were not properly *created*, that is, made out of nothing, for doubtless they had the same original with the rest of the fish; but the word is probably used, (and it is only used here and ver. 1. of all together, and ver. 27, of man) because the making of the whales, creatures of such vast bulk, seems to be the product of more than ordinary power, —almighty power indeed. Whales are the largest of all fishes, and are therefore mentioned to manifest the power of God. He that could make the whales, could much more make all the rest. Having made them, he blessed them. We do not find that he blessed the herbs and trees, and bid them be fruitful and multiply, for they have their seed in themselves. But to the fish and the fowl he doth give a command,

or rather a promise of fruitfulness; and along with this word, power went forth to make them fruitful, as is clear by the effect; for no creatures under heaven multiply like fishes; and it is the fruit of this benediction. The fowls are not bid to fill the earth or the air, as the fishes are bid to fill the sea; for the sea is peculiar to the fish, no creatures living in it but they, and therefore they may fill it: but the earth and air are common to birds, with men and beasts, and therefore, though they must multiply, they must not fill it.

24 And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.

25 And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that *it was good*.

Some think that these two verses of the creation of the beasts should rather belong to the fifth day's work; and they read them, *God had said, Let the earth bring*; or they think these words, *the evening and the morning were the fifth day*, should come in

after ver. 25, and that the words, *God saw that it was good*, may be allowed to be repeated twice in the fifth day's work, as they were in the third. But certainly we should be very careful how we chop the scriptures, and make transpositions where there are none, nor any grounds to support them. Neither can I see any inconvenience at all in placing the creation of the beasts on the same day with that of man, both being made of the same unlikely materials,—earth.

Let the earth bring forth the living creature ; a very unlikely thing that the earth, which had no life itself, should bring forth that which should have life. It is a known rule, *nil dat quod non habet* ; and therefore it is added, *and God made the beast*. The same almighty hand that made the earth, made the beasts out of it. That expression, *after his kind*, is repeated five times in these two verses, to intimate that the beasts were made, not only of divers forms, but of divers natures and fashions ; some to be tame about the house, others wild in the fields ; some living upon grass and herbs, others upon flesh ; some for service, some for sustenance, and some for neither. In all which appears the manifest wisdom of God.

26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness ; and let them have dominion over the fish of the

sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

27 So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him ; male and female created he them.

28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it : and have dominion over the fish of of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

29 And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which *is* upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which *is* the fruit of a tree yielding seed ; to you it shall be for meat.

30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein *there is* life, *I have given* every

green herb for meat: and it was so.

31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, *it was* very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

Of man, who brings up the rear of this glorious work, observe,

1. When he was made:—upon *the sixth day*; ver. 31. Heb. *that sixth day*, that was so remarkable. He was made last of all the creatures; and why so? The Jewish Talmud gives three good reasons why man was made in the close of the sixth day. (1.) Lest it should be suspected that man had been a helper to God in the creation of the world. (2.) To keep him humble. If he should begin to be proud, the very fly might come to him and say, “Proud as thou art, I was made before thee.” (3.) That as soon as he was made, he might enter upon the sanctification of the sabbath; that he might keep the sabbath before he tilled the ground. To which may be added, (4.) That he was made last, because he was the best; to teach us that our last works should be our best works. Man was, as it were, an epitome of all the rest, and therefore ’twas fit he should come last. God did, as it were, sum up the perfections of the visible world in man, who was the

microcosm,—a little map of the great world. (5.) To show the order of nature, which is to proceed from that which is imperfect, to that which is more perfect; which order will appear to an observing eye, to have been followed all along in the creation. (6.) That man, as soon as he was made, might have the whole creation before him, to contemplate. (7.) Because it was very fit the house of the world should be built and furnished, before man, the tenant, was brought in. God was too good a landlord to bring him into a cold, uncomfortable dwelling, as the world was at first. The resident's arrival was deferred till the palace was made ready for his reception.

2. How he was made; in a manner different from all the rest of the creatures. Remark,

First,—The consultation, (if I may call it so,) concerning man's creation. *God said, Let us make man.* Hitherto the phrase had been, *let it be*; let there be light, let there be a firmament, let the waters bring forth, &c.; but now, the phrase is altered: *Let us make man.* Some think this is a sign of majesty; as kings say, *we will and command.* But it is rather thought to give a hint of the Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the Godhead; three Persons, the same in substance, equal in power and glory. *Us*; not God and the angels, as the Jews, (to avoid the conviction of this scripture,) would have it under-

stood; for the angels, being our fellow-creatures, could not create: 'tis the prerogative of God himself. *Us*; the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Hence Eccles. xii. 1, *Remember thy Creators*; Job. xxxv. 10, *God my Makers*; Ps. cxlix. 2, *His Makers*. *God said*; there's the Unity of the Godhead: *Let us*; there's the Trinity of the Persons.

In our image, after our likeness. Interpreters do not agree about the meaning of this expression. (1.) Some think that image and likeness are all one, signifying one and the same thing; for in ver. 27, *image* only is mentioned, and in chap. v. 1, *likeness* only is mentioned. Also in 1 Cor. xv. 49, we are said to bear the *image* of the earthy. But compare Jam. iii. 9, where man is said to be made after the similitude or likeness of God. Both words are here used, —*in our image, after our likeness.* (2.) Others think they point at two different things. [1.] Man was made in the image of God as to his nature; not the nature of his body,—for God has no body,—but of his soul, and the powers and faculties thereof. God hath understanding, so hath the soul; freedom of will, so hath the soul; God is a spirit, immortal, invisible,—so is the soul. As there is but one God in the world, so there is but one soul in the body. And this image of God remains, (in part at least,) since the fall; and it is rendered as

an argument against killing our brother, Gen. ix. 6; and an aggravation of cursing him, Jam. iii. 9; for though he be a wicked man, and as such hath not the image of God's holiness, yet, being a man, he hath the image of his nature, and therefore must not be killed, therefore must not be cursed. [2.] Man was made in the likeness of God as to his holiness; possessing not only an understanding, but perfect light in that understanding; not only a will, but complete conformity to the will of God in that will; not only affections, but absolute rectitude and universal regularity in those affections; there were knowledge, (Coloss. iii. 10,) righteousness, and true holiness; (Eph. iv. 24;) sense, at all times and in all things, subject to reason, and that reason right reason; not the least defection or imperfection, want or weakness, infirmity or deformity, was to be found in the soul of Adam as it came out of the hands of God. He was without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; in a word, *God made man upright*. Eccles. vii. 29. Now, by sin, this likeness is quite lost and gone; not the least mark of it remains in fallen man; but by regeneration it is restored again, not completely in this life, but is begun here and perfected in heaven, with one comfortable addition more,—viz. an impossibility of losing this likeness again.

Secondly, The creation itself. *God created man.*

He not only said, Let us do it, but he did it. In men there are many good purposes that are never performed, either through weakness or forgetfulness; but it is not so with God.

3. How man was endowed when he was made. Three things God gave him: (1.) A blessing, with a promise of increase. (2.) Dominion over the creatures. Man was made to have the pre-eminence above them; they were all given into his hand, to be his servants. He is not their lord to abuse them, but their lord to use them; and being endued with a principle of reason, which they are not, 'tis fit he should rule, and not they. This dominion appears in the admirable skill man hath to tame them, to use them, to instruct them; and in the fear that God hath placed upon them towards him. This dominion is in part lost by the fall. Witness the frequent rebellions of the creatures against man, and the fear that man stands in of some of the creatures; which, when we observe, we should bewail as one sad consequence of sin. And yet it is not quite lost; else how could a little child drive a train of horses, any one of which, if he knew his own strength, would scorn to be ruled by the strongest man? There is a better dominion bestowed on us by grace;—a dominion over ourselves: not fishes, and fowls, and beasts; but Paul, and Apollos, and Cephas, and

life, and death, and things present, and things to come, are yours, if ye be Christ's. 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22. (3.) Provision for his maintenance; the same provision that is made for the beasts. Man, being of the same mould, is fed with the same meat, as the beasts. Some think that Adam and his children were to eat no flesh, but only herbs and fruits. And wherefore should God mention these particulars so expressly, if he did not thereby limit them from other things not mentioned? It should seem that leave to eat flesh was first given to Noah and his sons, after the flood. Chap. ix. 3. Others think that because man had dominion over the creatures, (which should seem to extend to the killing and eating of them, many of them being fit for no other use,) and because they were slain for sacrifice, chap. iv. 4; and clothes made of their skins, chap. iii. 21; he might and did eat flesh.

And God did not only provide for man, the lord, —but for the beasts, the servants. God's care extends even to them; and therefore ours should. Ps. civ. 27. cxlv. 15. But observe, he provided food first for man, and then for the cattle. They do ill that feed their beasts, their dogs, whilst they see men and women starve.

Lastly, here is the review and approbation of all:

(1.) The review: *God saw every thing that he*

had made. He did every day look back upon the works of the day; and now, at the end of the week, he reflected upon the works of the week, to teach us to do likewise. Reflecting work should be daily work, and especially weekly work, that we may set all straight, before we come to wait upon God in sabbath ordinances.

(2.) The approbation: *behold, it was very good.* When we reflect, we shall find much very bad; but God saw all very good. It is not well, therefore, to say of any creature, It is naught: God saw that all was good; and surely we can see none bad, unless it be our own hearts. Now the whole was finished. Every part was good,—but all together were very good; and blessed be that God that made all things, even all things for himself.

CHAPTER II.

We have in the records of this chapter, I. The sabbath instituted, blessed, and sanctified; II. The work of creation reviewed and particularized; III. Paradise described, and man placed in it; and, IV. Woman created. and marriage instituted.

THUS the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

Men begin many things which, either through inability or mutability, they cannot or do not finish; but it is not so with the almighty, unchangeable God; for *as for God, his way is perfect.* Ps. xviii. 30. If in our thoughts we walk the rounds of the creation, and tell the towers, and mark the bulwarks thereof, (Ps. xlviii. 12, 13;) we shall see reason to say of God's works, as the Psalmist doth of his thoughts, *how great is the sum of them.* Ps. cxxxix. 17, 18. All the creatures with which the heaven and earth are replenished, are called a host or army,

1. Because of the countless number of them. 2. Because of the excellent order of them, like an army, placed rank and file. 3. Because of the use which God is pleased to make of them for the defence and safeguard of his friends, and the ruin of his enemies. The angels are God's host, (Luke ii. 13—15;) and there's a guard of them to protect Jacob, (Gen. xxxii. 1;) and to defend Elisha, (2 Kings vi. 17;) and one of them routs an army of Assyrians. (2 Kings xix. 35.) The stars are called the hosts of heaven, (Deut. iv. 19. Isa. xxxiv. 4,) and they in their courses fight against Sisera. Judg. v. 20. If Assyrians worship idols in Israel's land, God has a host of lions to plague them with, (2 Kings xvii. 25, 26;) nay, if occasion be, he hath hosts of frogs, and lice, and flies, with which to tame a proud Pharaoh, that professes he knows him not. Ex. viii. Hence God is frequently called the Lord of hosts,—of sabaoth, Rom. ix. 29. Jam. v. 4; all the creatures in heaven and earth being absolutely and universally at his beck and disposal.

2 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.

3 And God blessed the seventh day,

and sanctified it : because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

All things were made in the space of six days, and the seventh was the day of rest. *He rested on the seventh day.* This is spoken after the manner of men, (for God is not wearied as we are, Isa. xl. 28,) and means that on the seventh day God made no new creatures, (or rather species of creatures,) as he had done on each of the six days. God's resting from the works of creation doth not hinder but that he may and doth make, though no new species of creatures, yet new individuals; nor but that he may and doth work still in his providence. Our Saviour tells us, *My Father worketh hitherto.* John v. 17. God is at work every day, sabbath-days as well as week-days, bringing about the designs of his own glory; in all which doth manifestly appear the same infinite wisdom, power, and goodness, as were put forth in the work of creation.

God put a peculiar blessing upon the seventh day, and appointed it to be a day of rest. No creature being made upon that day, it might seem perhaps to come short in honour of the rest of the days; God did therefore bless it,—and so place upon it a signal mark of honour above the other six days. By this

blessing the sabbath was instituted, and ordained to be a day of more especial communion and fellowship between the Creator and the creature. Some think it is mentioned here by way of prolepsis, or anticipation, and that it was not instituted till the law of the fourth commandment was given, among the rest, upon Mount Sinai. But that the sabbath was instituted from the beginning, is clear from Heb. iv. 4, and Ex. xvi. 23. Nor is it likely that the patriarchs were without a time for the solemn service and worship of God.

Sanctified it ; that is, set it apart from common and profane uses, and dedicated it to sacred and divine uses ; put a difference between it and other days. To *sanctify* is, in a strict sense, to *make* holy. God sanctifies us, by putting an inherent holiness in us : he sanctified the sabbath by putting an adherent holiness upon it ; which none but God can do. It passes the skill of any man or company of men in the world, to make any part of time holy. Man may make a good day, such as the feast of Purim, Esth. ix. 18, 19, 26 ; but man cannot make a holy day, (though there have been some that have taken upon them such a power, but I know no ground they have for it,) for 'tis God's prerogative to sanctify time.

The sabbath being sanctified, that is, made holy,

- by God,—it ought to be sanctified, that is, kept holy, by us; which is the marrow of sabbath duty required in the fourth commandment. 'Tis no less than sacrilege to profane the sabbath; 'tis alienating that which is sacred; robbing God of his own time; making that (as far as lies in our power) unholy, which God hath made holy. God's resting on the the seventh day is rendered in the fourth commandment as a reason why we should rest. As we should labour to be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect, so we should rest as our heavenly Father rested; and not only rest, (so the beasts do,) but dedicate and devote that rest to the service and worship of God in all his ordinances. The sabbath was made by God not only a blessed day, but a blessing day; a day in which he will meet and bless his people; and it is our duty to wait upon him for that blessing.

The reason of the change of the sabbath from the last to the first day of the week, we have in the New Testament; viz.—because on the first day of the week the Lord Jesus rested from the work of our redemption, which he finished when he rose again from the dead, according to the Scriptures. See Jer. xvi. 14, 15.

4 These *are* the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were

created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens,

5 And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew : for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and *there was* not a man to till the ground.

The work of creation is a thing not only so useful, but so needful to be well known and firmly believed, that it is inculcated upon us line upon line. *These are the generations of the heaven and the earth* ; thus were the heavens and the earth created and made. I have given you the story of the rise and original of the universe, that you may not dream of the world's eternity ; for how can that which was created be from everlasting ? The snow and the frost are said to be begotten, Job. xxxviii. 28, 29 ; and the mountains to be brought forth, Ps. xc. 2.

In the day. It was six days ; wherefore then is it called the day ? Because God doth not measure time as we do ; if a thousand years, much less are six days, as one day with God. *Day* is used for time, as *this thy day*, Luke xix. 42.

The LORD God ; JEHOVAH *Elohim*. This is the

first place in the Bible where we find that incommunicable name of God, **JEHOVAH**; which signifies having his being of himself, and giving being to all things. As long as God is described as creating the world, he is not called **JEHOVAH**; but as soon as ever the heavens and the earth were finished, now he is styled **JEHOVAH**,—a finishing God. Though from eternity he had his being of himself, yet he had never till now given being to all things.

God made every plant *before it was in the earth*, so as to have benefit by the earth; and *before it grew*, (or rather flourished,) that is, received nourishment from the earth, because there was no rain to moisten, no man to till, the ground. God planted them, and made them fruitful, without the least help or assistance of means or second causes. And still, though Paul may plant, and Apollos water, yet it is only God that gives the increase. 1 Cor. iii. 6.

6 But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.

Though there was no rain, there went up a mist to supply the place of it; some kind of means, though very unlikely to do any thing to the purpose. But a mist, if God shower down his blessing with it, will

more further the fruitfulness of the earth, than a great deal of rain without that blessing. Well, the mist makes up one want, viz. that of rain; but still there is not a man to till the ground; and therefore there follows a more particular account of man's creation.

7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

Man consists of two parts;—a body, which is the shell, the cabinet;—a soul, which is the kernel, the jewel, and both the workmanship of the great God.

I. For his body. *The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground*; here's the long and short of man's original. The Creator was the LORD God; for it is *he that hath made us, and not we ourselves*, Ps. c. 3; and Adam is for this reason styled *the son of God*. Luke iii. 38. Some of the creatures are said to be *created*; others to be *made*; and of all together it is said, that they were *created and made*; but now man is spoken of, a new word is taken,—God *formed* man. The rest of the creatures started up on a sudden, at the speaking of a word; but man is formed by degrees, and thus becomes as it were

the work of God's fingers. It was but reasonable that he that was to be the object of God's special care and love, in his ensuing providences towards him, should have some pre-eminence above the rest in his creation. So in Ps. cxxxix. 15, man is said to be *curiously wrought*,—*acu pictus*,—embroidered as with a needle. The word translated *formed*, properly signifies the potter's forming of his vessel upon the wheel, and elegantly applies to the creation of man; for is not man the clay, and God the Potter? Isa. lxiv. 8.

Of the dust of the ground. A very unlikely thing (I should think) to make man of. But the same infinite power that made the world of nothing, made man,—the masterpiece,—of next to nothing; and this sets forth the wisdom and power of God. And lest we should imagine this to be some extraordinary dust, perhaps golden dust, we are told that it was dust *of the ground*; common, ordinary dust. In the original it is, *God formed man the dust of the ground*; not of the dust only, but dust itself. His body was nothing else but a heap of dust, a clod of clay. Oh! how should it lay us low, and keep us low, to consider the meanness of our origin. What hath dust to be proud of? Well may we say, we have nothing but what we have received. The sprinkling of dust upon new writing prevents a blot;

so of our original dust prevents proud boasting.

II. As to the soul of man. That was not made of the dust of the ground: that is of more noble extraction. What fools then are they that fix their thoughts, and affections, and desires, (the noble faculties of a heaven-born soul,) upon earthly objects; minding and pursuing earthly things, as if their souls were clods of clay. Phil. iii. 19. No; the soul was made of better mould, and designed for better purposes.

God breathed. He is therefore called the God of the spirits of all flesh, Num. xxvii. 16; and still the soul is the breath of God, not produced as the body is, by the parents. Elihu acknowledges, *the breath of the Almighty hath given me life*, Job xxxiii. 4; and the spirit is said to return to God that gave it. Eccles. xii. 7. And should not the soul be employed for God, that was received from God? Certainly it should.

The breath of life; Heb. *of lives*; including all the powers and faculties of the soul; all which we owe to Him who breathed into our first father the breath of life. And as our natural being, by which we live, is the fruit of God's beathing into us the breath of life; so the spiritual being, by which we live to God, is the fruit of God's breathing into our souls the grace of Christ. A soul without grace, is

but the carcase of a soul. Grace is spiritual life, and is of God's imparting.

8 And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

When the rest of the creatures were made, God had in a manner done with them, and nothing remained but the putting forth of common acts of providence, for their preservation and supply; but as for man, he did not leave him so, but did, as it were, separate him from the rest, and make him the object of his special love and care. In the first place he provided a peculiar abode for him, in the garden of Eden; concerning which, doubtless it might be said, as it was of the land of Canaan, that it was a place which God himself spied out for him; a choice place, a chosen place. Concerning the rest of the plants, God had only said, *Let the earth bring forth*, &c., (chap. i. 11;) but when he comes to speak of Paradise, he uses another expression, (as before, concerning man,) *The Lord God planted a garden*; hence called the garden of the Lord, Gen. xiii. 10; in the Hebrew, *Pardese*, (Paradise,) an orchard. Cant. iv. 13. Eccles. ii. 5. *In Eden*, which signifies pleasure. It was, no question, a pleasant place, and 'tis therefore called a garden; not for the quan-

tity of it, but for the goodness of the soil, and the sweetness of the situation.

9 And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food ; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

God, consulting not only Adam's profit, but his pleasure, provided not only for mere necessity, but for his comfort and delight. Having given him a body as well as a soul, he gave him,—not only his own love and communion with himself, which was the happiness and comfort of his soul,—but also beautiful trees and pleasant fruit, to be the food and delight of his body. And was this all that Adam had in Eden? Much good may it do him. Have not we trees in our gardens and orchards, that are pleasant to the eye and good for food? What advantage then had Adam? Much every way. Eden's trees were far more pleasant to the sight, and much better for food, I doubt not, than any of ours are; Eden's nettles beyond our roses. And there were moreover two trees peculiar to paradise, which were the glory of it, and which are here particularly mentioned :

1. *The tree of life.* What tree this was is too nice a question; but why it was called the tree of life is a good question. It was called so perhaps for one of these three reasons: Either, (1.) Because the fruit of it had a special quality and virtue, (whether natural or supernatural is uncertain,) to preserve and prolong life, and so to be an appointed means of Adam's immortality, which was the happiness promised him; and, it being God's usual way to work even extraordinary effects by ordinary (though unlikely) means, he instituted this tree to be the means of Adam's attaining that which he had promised him. Or, (2.) Because it was to be a sign or memorial to Adam, of the fountain and original of that life which he had. God would have Adam, as often as he tasted the fruit of that tree, to remember from whence he had his life, and to remember it with thankfulness. So that it was, in effect, a visible signification of that great truth, that *in Him we live, and move, and have our being.* Acts xvii. 28. And if Adam in innocency had need of such mementos, what need have we! Or, (3.) Because it was a seal of the covenant of works which God made with Adam. It was ordained by God to be a sacrament to him, to signify and seal to him life eternal, and to assure him of immortality, upon condition of perfect obedience. One calls the

tree of life a church, to which Adam and all his posterity were to resort to receive the sacrament; to take, eat, and live for ever.

2. *The tree of knowledge of good and evil.* In determining what kind of tree this was, divers learned men have been both too curious and too confident. It is a rule which we have as much occasion to observe in our searches into these first three or four chapters of Genesis, as any where else in all the Bible, that where God hath not a mouth to speak, we should not desire to have an ear to hear, nor covet to be wise above what is written. This tree was not called so because it had any virtue or power by being eaten, either to work or increase knowledge; but (1.) From the event, as the well of contention, Gen. xxvi. 20, was called Esek, because they contended about it; so this was called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, because Adam, by eating it, did come to know, that is to experience, to know to his cost, the difference between good and evil;—to know the worth of Paradise;—good, by the loss of it; and the weight and burthen of all evil, by the sense of it. (2.) Others think it was called so, because it was the visible rule by which to know moral good and evil, not in and of itself, but by virtue of the command which God gave concerning it. (3.) Some think this tree was another sacramental sign annexed to the cove-

nant of works, sealing to Adam death, if he did eat of it. Obey and live, was one part of the covenant, and the seal of that was the tree of life, of which Adam might eat and live : Disobey and die, was the other part of the covenant, and the seal of that was the tree of knowledge of good and evil, of which Adam did eat and die.

10 And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.

11 The name of the first *is* Pison : that *is* it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where *there is* gold ;

12 And the gold of that land *is* good : there *is* bdellium and the onyx stone.

13 And the name of the second river *is* Gihon : the same *is* it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia :

14 And the name of the third river *is* Hiddekel : that *is* it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river *is* Euphrates.

'Tis clear that this garden was a part of the habitable earth; and, by following the description of it

here laid down, (which seems to justify such enquiries,) some learned men have given very great light concerning the particular place of it. We find the region of Eden mentioned in Isa. xxxvii. 12, and Ezek. xxvii. 23; and it is known at this day by that name in the parting of the two regions of Assyria and Babylonia, and is a place extraordinarily fruitful, especially in palm trees. Yet still we are at uncertainties; God having left us so much in the dark concerning this earthly paradise, that we may make sure to ourselves a place in the heavenly paradise, whence we shall fall no more.

15 And the LORD God took the man, and put him in the garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it.

The house being ready and furnished, nothing is wanting but the tenant; and behold he comes, led by his Lord and Maker, who (as it was meet) accompanies him, to put him in possession of this happy place! The same that was the Author of man's being, is here the Author of his well-being. Adam did not run, as soon as he was made, to seek his fortune, and fix where he himself thought best; but leaves it to God, to put him where he pleased. A man may be with comfort in any place, though it

be a prison, in which he can see God by his providence putting him; but he that puts himself in a place without God, let him take what follows.

Man was made *out* of the garden, of common clay, not of paradise dust; and was afterwards taken and put in, which was for three ends: (1.) To show that his being there was an act of free grace, and pure love. He that made him out of paradise, might have kept him out of paradise, if he had so pleased. (2.) To keep him humble; that when he was pleasing himself with his paradise comforts, the remembrance of the rock whence he was hewn, and the hole of the pit whence he was digged, might serve to keep him low in his own eyes. (3.) That seeing the difference between being in and being out of paradise, and having found it by experience, he might be the more careful to walk circumspectly.

Adam, even in innocency, had a calling. If greatness or goodness, height or holiness, knowledge or wisdom, parts or perfection, could give a writ of ease, Adam had certainly been without a calling; but God puts him in a calling, and a calling he must have. Eden was a place of happiness and delight, and to be idle there would have been a double fault. Paradise was a type of the church, in which our Master will have none to be idle. 'Tis

a standing rule, *that if any would not work, neither should he eat.* 2 Thess. iii. 10.

16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat :

17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it : for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

The covenant which God entered into with Adam, is sometimes called a covenant of life, because life was the reward promised; sometimes a covenant of works, because works were the duty required. This covenant is much more obscurely laid down than the covenant of grace after the fall; but that it was not only a law, but also a covenant, is clear from this scripture, where the threatening of death to disobedience, plainly implies a promise of life to obedience. Besides, if God did not deal with Adam in a covenant way, how came his posterity to be guilty of his sin? Not by natural propagation, for then the sin of our immediate parents would be made ours, as well as Adam's; (whereas the apostle charges it upon one man, Rom. v. 15—19;) but by a federal agreement made with Adam as a public person, whilst he was in an innocent estate.

The great goodness of God to his creature in making such plentiful provision for him, did questionless very much aggravate Adam's sin in eating the forbidden fruit. If God had left him but one tree only to eat of, and restrained him from all the rest, it had been another matter; but when he restrained him from one only, and gave him his choice of all the rest, that doth make his sin more exceedingly sinful. God, that would not have the mouth of the ox muzzled when he trod out the corn, (Deut. xxv. 4,) would not withhold Eden's fruit from Adam, that took the care of Eden's garden. 1 Cor. ix. 7.

But though Adam's pasture was wide, yet it had a hedge; and though his liberties were large, yet they had their limits. The positive law, *thou shalt not eat*, was very plain and express, and contained no hard words or phrases: it was easy to understand, as easy to remember, and (one would think) every jot as easy to obey. As for a reason, the will of the Law-giver is reason enough; but the ends of it may be supposed to have been,

1. To make Adam know that high as he was, yet still he was but a subject, and that there was one above him that had power to command him.

2. To try his obedience. He had by nature a principle within him utterly averse to every thing that was in itself sinful; so that it was against his

very nature to do any such action; and, therefore, God would try him with the command of a thing which was in itself neither good nor evil, antecedent to the command, that he might have respect to nothing but the will of God, and obey purely for obedience sake; and to obey is better than sacrifice. 1 Sam. xv. 22.

Thou shalt not eat; thou, O man; thou, my creature; thou that I have been so kind to, so careful of, and done so much for. This little word carries in it a great argument to move Adam to obey this command.

In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. Even Adam in innocency was awed with a threatening, which is one part of the hedge of the law; for God, being a Master as well as a Father, requires not only the love of children, but the fear of servants. Mal. i. 6. Here note,

1. The thing threatened, Death; a short word, but very comprehensive, including in it all the miseries both of this life, and of that which is to come; which are all the wages, that is, the due desert of sin.

2. This death was to be sudden; *in the day*. Sin and death are such inseparable companions, that the former could not come into the world a day sooner than the latter, *Sin entered into the world, and, immediately it follows, death by sin.* Rem. v. 12.

3. This death was to be certain,—*surely die*: Heb.—dying thou shalt die; noting either the severity, or rather the certainty, of his death. But how was the threatening fulfilled, when Adam lived many a long year after he had sinned? Death is threefold: (1.) There is spiritual death, which is the death of the soul, by which it is deprived of the love of God, and of all sweet communion with him, and gracious communications from him. And if in God's favour be life,—yea, if his favour be better than life itself,—(and so it is to a gracious soul,)—surely in the want of that favour is death; yea, his displeasure is worse than death itself. As his smiles are quickening smiles, so his frowns are killing frowns. Now, being deprived of these smiles, and lying under these frowns, is the death of the soul; and thus Adam died in the very day, the very hour, that he sinned. (2.) There is a natural death, the death of the body, consisting in the separation of it from the soul; and how did Adam thus die in the day of his sin? Why, [1.] He became mortal: as soon as he had sinned, he became subject to death. The reward promised to his obedience, was immortality; not essential,—for, being made of the dust of the ground, he had in him the seeds of corruptibility,—but immediately, by the gift of God; and that immortality he lost. [2.] He became obnoxious to death.

As soon as he had sinned, he lay at God's mercy every hour; he was dead, in law, like a condemned malefactor; sentence was passed, (chap. iii. 19,) though execution was not yet done. [3.] The symptoms and harbingers of death did instantly seize him;—fear and shame, pain and sickness. Death then struck the first blow, and never left hacking and hewing at him, though it were nine hundred and thirty years before the last blow came. (3.) There is eternal death; *everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.* 2 Thess. i. 9. And this Adam became liable to; so that, as soon as he had sinned, if God had thrown him, body and soul, into hell, he had done him no wrong.

Christ, having undertaken to satisfy offended justice, must therefore of necessity die, because of this threatening. If the debtor must die, the surety must die.

18 And the LORD God said, *It is* not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

Hitherto Adam was alone: the angels were above him,—for he was made a little lower than the angels, (Ps. viii. 5,)—and they being spiritual beings, were not fit to hold converse with him, who was

made of the dust. The beasts were a step below him,—not endued with such a rational soul as he was endued with; so that he was alone, though he had a world of creatures about him; and this, God said, was not good for him. (1.) Not for the good of his comfort; for man, being naturally a sociable creature, delights in company; and if there were but one man in the world, how dismal and uncomfortable a life he would lead, is easy to imagine. Solomon saith and proves that two are better than one, and woe to him that is alone. Eccles. iv. 9, 10, 11, 12. (2.) Not for the good of his kind; for how could one increase and multiply, according to the blessing? Chap. i. 28.

The woman was made *to be a help meet for him*; was made for the man, as saith the apostle, 1 Cor. xi. 9. The great thing that should direct the choice, and doth influence the comfort, of that relationship, is *meetness*; and truly where there is not *meetness*, I think there will be but little *help*.

19 And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought *them* unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam cal-

led every living creature, that *was* the name thereof.

20 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field ; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.

The creatures were thus brought to Adam, that he might give them names suitable to their natures; and it is found that in the Hebrew language, (which probably was the language Adam spoke,) the names are such as do manifest that he that gave them was well acquainted with the properties and qualities of the several creatures.

21 And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept : and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof.

This was an extraordinary sleep, sent by God. Ordinary sleep is likewise his gift, and he is to be acknowledged in it; for as he gave Adam, so he giveth his beloved, sleep. Ps. cxvii. 2.

Adam, though he was sensible of the want of a help meet for him, yet he was not perplexing him-

self with care what he should do for a wife; but lies him down and sleeps securely, casting all his care upon God,—who cared for him, and provided a wife for him while he was sleeping, which he could not do for himself while he was waking.

Adam lost a rib, but he got a better thing instead of it, even a help meet for him. Thus God uses to deal with his children: they lose sometimes some of their creature-comforts; but then perhaps they get more of the Creator's comforts, and that's a blessed exchange. This bone was taken out of Adam's side, fitly noting the woman's place: not out of his head, to be above him; nor out of his feet, to be trampled on by him; nor from before him, as his better; nor from behind him, as his servant;—but out of his side, to be equal with him; near his heart, for he owes her love; under his arm, for he owes her protection. Surely they forget from whence the woman was taken, that carry themselves haughtily and abusively towards their wives.

Out of the side of Christ, the second Adam, was his spouse the church formed, when he slept the sleep of death upon the cross, and out of his pierced side came forth blood and water.

22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he

a woman, and brought her unto the man.

23 And Adam said, *This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh : she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.*

Having made the woman, God did not leave her to her own disposal. He presented her to Adam, to be the companion of his life, and a second self to him. That wife that is of God's making by special grace, and of God's bringing by special providence, is of all others most likely to prove a help meet for a man. Not Eve only, but every good wife, is from the Lord ; and 'tis an affair in which, no doubt, the Lord is to be sought unto. Prov. xviii. 22. xix. 14.

24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife : and they shall be one flesh.

'Tis no small honour which is stamp't upon the marriage state, that it was instituted and ordained in innocency. It did not come in with sin ; but, upon the account of antiquity, claims precedence before any other institution. How ill they do that speak

contemptuously and reproachfully of that honourable estate, *forbidding to marry*. 1 Tim. iv. 3.

Therefore shall a man. 'Tis doubted who spoke this, whether God himself to Adam, or Moses the historian, or whether Adam himself. In Matt. xix. 5, these words are said to be spoken by God; which may mean, that Adam spoke them by the special instinct of the Holy Spirit. From God's making one man only and one woman, the LORD himself draws an argument against polygamy,—that is, the having of many wives. Mal. ii. 15. God could have taken many ribs, and made each of them a wife for Adam, if he had so pleased. No: he made but one Eve for one Adam; for though the multiplying of wives was afterwards practised even by God's own people, yet from the beginning it was not so.

25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Here's an evidence of the purity, simplicity, and integrity, of that innocent estate wherein they were, in two things: 1. *They were both naked.* They came into the world, as all their children do, naked; had nothing on them for offence or defence. Clothes came in with sin; what little reason then have we to be proud of them! 2. *They were not ashamed.*

Nakedness was not then, as it is now, a shame. Sin and shame came into the world together.

This was Adam's condition in Paradise: and truly I cannot think of it without such reflections as a young man whose father had by treason forfeited a fair estate, would be filled with upon the sight of it. Oh! how happy might I have been now, had it not been for my father's folly! So how blessed a condition had the children of men been in, if our father Adam could have known when he was well; but he, like a fool, lost all at one unhappy throw. *God made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.* Eccles. vii. 29.

CHAPTER III.

The story of this chapter is a very bad story ; and (I think I may say) there's not a story, not a chapter in all the Old Testament, wherein every one of us is so nearly concerned as in this ; and therefore surely we are to look upon ourselves as obliged to study it much, and to be well acquainted with it, and to labour to get our hearts thoroughly warmed and seriously affected with it, that it may not be to us as a tale that is told. The general parts of the chapter are four : I. An offence committed ; II. The offenders arraigned ; III. Sentence passed ; IV. Execution done.

NOW the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden ?

The tempter, by whose instigation this offence was committed, was the devil; that wicked one who is known in scripture by that name,—the tempter, (Matt. iv. 3,)—who, having by sin undone himself, was restless till he had undone man too. I believe there was no long space of time between the two. Being wicked himself, he soon became a promoter of wickedness; no sooner a sinner but a Satan. The devil, though he were a spirit, yet before the fall could not, as now he doth, suggest to man any inward temptation,—and therefore he must do it in some outward, visible appearance. He chose the serpent to be the instrument of this temptation, because it is a subtle creature. Divers instances are given of the subtlety of serpents; how crafty they are to do mischief, and how crafty to defend it when it is done; and perhaps the serpent was more subtle before the fall than now. No such a fit tool for the devil to work with, as graceless wit, and unsanctified subtlety.

Satan, having such a great hand as it seems he had, in bringing sin, and death by sin, into the world, 'tis very strange that men so far thwart the principles of right reason, as to give themselves over to the service (or slavery rather) of such an enemy, a sworn enemy to mankind. If men were not perfectly besotted, I know not how it could be.

The woman was the weaker vessel; man's inferior, no doubt, in knowledge and understanding; therefore the devil set upon her with the temptation. Like a cunning captain, he plants his cannon against the weakest part of the wall. He set upon Christ when hungry. Matt. iv. 2, 3. It had been better for Eve to have staid in company with Adam; her wandering from her husband laid her open to this temptation. 'Tis well known what Dinah got (or lost rather) by gadding. Eve, when she forsook the guide of her youth, soon forgot the covenant of her God. Prov. ii. 17.

"When the devil tempted our first parents to sin, he did not single out any of God's moral precepts; those were too deeply imprinted in the soul, and of clearer light: but he made choice of that positive precept which was not so obvious to reason, and seemed to have some mystery in it."—LAWSON.

Yea, hath God said? The first word, *yea*, seems to intimate that there had been some past discourse between them which is not recorded. But some read it, *Why* hath God said? that is, Can you give any reason for this command? "I know you cannot; 'tis an unreasonable command, and 'tis not fit such reasonable creatures as you are should be bound by it." We see whose language they speak, that must have a *why* and a *wherefore* for every command;

and think nothing their duty which their purblind understandings cannot see a reason for; as if the will of the lawgiver were not enough to enforce the law.

Hath God said? The first thing Satan endeavours is, to beget in Eve hard thoughts of God; as if he had wronged them in cutting them short of liberty in that matter. "Hath God laid such an unreasonable command upon you? Does it not argue him a hard Master?" Hard thoughts of God are at the bottom of a great many of our sinful departures from God. The slothful servant is an instance. Matt. xxv. 24, 25. Or, on the contrary, he might say, "No, no; you cannot think God is in earnest: he loves you too well to forbid you the eating of this delicious fruit." It is one grand artifice of the devil, to raise scruples in the minds of people concerning the divine commands, as if they were not so strict as they are taken to be.

2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden :

3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

Eve's entering into a parley with the serpent discovers her to be on the borders of sin. She should have said, with our blessed Saviour, *Get thee behind me, Satan.* Matt. xvi. 23. Joseph flies when his mistress tempts. Gen. xxxix. 12. When the besieged sound a parley, the castle is not far from a surrender.

Neither shall ye touch it. We do not find that this was part of the command, and Eve therefore represents the command as more strict than indeed it was. Many times those that are most forward to add to divine commands, so making the way to heaven narrower to others than it is, are more ready than others to transgress the command. The Pharisees did add to the law of God by their traditions, and who more frequent than they in the breach of the law? However, Eve knew that touching was a step towards eating, and that those who would be kept from any sin, must be very careful to keep themselves from the occasions of it.

4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die :

5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

See how restless Satan is in his malicious designs; if one way will not do, he'll try another. Two things he further urges for the strengthening of the temptation:—

1. He promises impunity; *ye shall not surely die*. “Can infinite goodness kill his creatures as soon as he hath made them, for eating one apple? I know you cannot think so.” The same with this, is his saying to the children of Adam now, in his temptations; “you shall not surely die; God is merciful, and cannot find in his heart to do it.” This is the devil's language,—though he himself knows to his cost that sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death; that God spared not the angels that sinned. 2 Pet. ii. 4. And yet how many go on in sin, upon that presumption! If people did but seriously believe that death was at the heels of sin, surely they would be more cautious.

2. He urges the benefit of the sin. Your condition is good now, but then it will be better; *ye shall be as gods*. Eve and Adam were already like God, and it was their unspeakable happiness; but the devil put it into their heads that eating the forbidden fruit would make them more like him. Instead however of being like God, they became like the beasts that perish. Such arguments the devil still uses to allure people to sin; he tells them of this,

and that, and the other, to be got by sin; tell a lie, and here's money to be got by it; go and be drunk, and you'll have the pleasure; submit your conscience to the impositions of others, and here's preferment for you. Whereas, in the upshot, the sinner may put all his gains by sin in his eye, and see never the worse for it.

6 And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

The woman had not strength to resist the temptation, and so was overcome by it. The method and order of the sin, (for there is an order even in disorders,) is very observable. She proceeded by four steps, each worse than the other:

1. *She saw*, the sin began in the eye. Not that there was any harm in looking in itself, but as looking was an occasion of lusting. She pleased herself with the sight of that curious apple; and the fiery dart which the devil shot in at her eye, soon pierced and poisoned her heart. 'Tis Solomon's advice, and

it is very wholesome advice, *look not at the wine when it is red.* Prov. xxiii. 31. A great deal of sin begins in the eye. What need have we then, with Job, to make a covenant with our eyes; Job xxxi. 1; and to pray with David, *turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity.* Ps. cxix. 31. In this tree the woman saw three things that tempted her: (1) *That it was good for food*; there's the lust of the flesh. There was provision enough elsewhere, but she could not but think this better food than any other, and therefore this she must have. How many are betrayed to sin by the desires of their fleshly appetite! (2) *It was pleasant to the eyes*; there's the lust of the eye. 'Twas said of all the trees of the garden that they were *pleasant to the sight, and good for food.* Chap. ii. 9. Why could she not turn her eyes upon some other tree, and reason thus?—"What a fool am I to desire this which I am forbidden to eat of, when here's a tree as good as that, which I may eat of?" But the desire of that which is forbidden, is natural to us. (3) *And a tree to be desired to make one wise*; there's the pride of life. She perceived, by what the devil said, that it would make them like gods; not for holiness and purity, (that was not pretended,) but for wisdom and knowledge. So divine a thing is wisdom, and so excellent is knowledge, (how much soever it be des-

pised by carnal hearts,) that innocency itself was so ambitious of it, as to choose rather to incur the highest displeasure of an offended God than want it; nay, than want greater degrees of it.

How many hath the irregular and inordinate desire of unnecessary knowledge been the ruin of! How many with all their learning, have yet to learn that great lesson, *secret things belong not to us*. Deut. xxix. 29.

The Lord Jesus Christ is indeed a tree (the tree of life) *to be desired to make one wise*; and how well would it be if people would but see their own folly, and come to him in whom *are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*. Col. ii. 3. That which our first parents promised themselves to have by sin, and missed of, we may promise ourselves to have by faith, and be assured of.

2. *She took*, The devil did not take it and put it into her mouth, whether she would or not. Though he be a powerful enemy, yet he cannot force any man to sin: sin is not to be laid wholly at his door, bad as he is. *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself*. Hos. xiii. 9.

3. *She did eat*. The way of sin is down hill; a man cannot stop himself when he would. Perhaps when Eve *took*, she did not think to *eat*.

4. *She gave also to her husband*. Those that

have fallen into sin themselves are very prone to entice others to it. As was the devil, so was Eve; no sooner a sinner but a tempter.

Or perhaps she did this out of kindness to her husband. Having tasted how good it was, she must needs have him to taste too. 'Tis thus with those that have tasted of the love of Christ: they are very desirous that others should taste of it likewise. True grace hates monopoly, and he that hath it, doth not use to eat his spiritual morsel alone.

To her husband with her. It was, no doubt, the devil's design in tempting the woman, to make her a temptation to her husband. It is the policy of Satan to send temptations to us by the hands of our near relations. If he would have Job to curse God, he doth not come himself, but sends his wife to persuade him. Job ii. 9. What need then have we to watch; and heed not so much who speaks, as what is spoken.

This sin of Adam in eating the forbidden fruit, was a complicated sin. Some reckon it no less than, (1.) An evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God; (2.) A hearkening to the counsel of the devil, rather than to the command of his Maker; (3.) Pride and ambition, in desiring to become like God; (4.) Discontent with his own condition, though it was a happy condition; (5.) Hard thoughts entertained of God, as too strict and severe a Master; (6.)

A professed dislike, and (which is worse) contempt of the gracious covenant which God had made with him; and (7.) Disobedience to the express command of his Creator.

This sin will also appear to be an aggravated sin if we consider (1.) That it was committed against as great knowledge as ever any mere man had; (2.) That it was an ill requital of the kindness of God to him, and the care of God for him: he sinned against the clearest light and dearest love that ever sinner sinned against; (3.) That the command broken was neither hard to understand, hard to remember, nor hard to obey; (4.) That there was all the reason in the world why he should obey, and nothing that deserves to be called a reason why he should not; (5.) That the temptation was not very strong. An apple (if it were so) was, one would think, no great tempting thing. 'Twas a transgression without cause. Ps. xxv. 3; (6.) That there was no enemy in the garrison; no corruption, I mean, in his bosom, to betray Adam to this sin: nay, the freedom of his will was such that he had a power, and the holiness and rectitude of his will such that he could not but have an inclination, to resist it; (7.) That he turned aside quickly; Exod. xxxii. 8; he kept his integrity but a very little while; (8.) That the place where this sin was committed was paradise; that sweet place of holiness

and happiness; *at the sea, even the Red Sea*; Ps. cvi. 7; and lastly, that this sin was the first sin; a fountain and foundation of sin; that this opened the gap which all the sin and misery that has been ever since, and will be to eternity, came in at. Now, laying all this together, it will appear that though this sin, at first sight, looks like a small matter, and not deserving the death threatened, yet that it was an exceeding sinful sin.

7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

Their conscience was soon awake, after they had sinned; their hearts smote them, like David's, when he had numbered the people. 2 Sam. xxiv. 10. Before their sin, they could not see what an evil and a bitter thing it was to depart from God; they could not see the sad effects and consequences of sin; but now their eyes were opened, and they did see it. They saw the happiness they had fallen from, and the misery they were fallen into. They saw a loving God provoked,—his grace and favour forfeited,—his likeness and image lost,—dominion over the creatures gone; in a word, they saw themselves stript of

all their paradise privileges. They saw (and it was a sad sight) their nature corrupted, a law in their members warring against the law of their minds, (Rom. vii. 23,) and themselves, with all their posterity, exposed to all miseries both in this life and in that which is to come. Thus their eyes were opened; thus they experimentally knew good and evil; good, by the loss of it; evil, by the sense of it.

They knew that they were naked. So they did before, but now they knew it with shame and confusion of face. Shame is the fruit of sin; sometimes, shame in the world before men; always, either the shame of true repentance, which ends in glory, or that shame and everlasting contempt, to which the wicked shall rise at the great day. Dan. xii. 2.

They sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons. When they saw their nakedness, they did what they could to cover it, and yet alas! it was but a poor shift. Just like these aprons are all the pretences which sinners make to excuse themselves when they have sinned.

8 And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the

LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.

Perhaps the offenders were not arraigned immediately after the commission of the sin. God let them alone awhile, to feel where they were; and it may be they were ready to say, peace, peace; to bless themselves in their own way, (though a wicked way,) till their iniquity was found hateful, and that it was quickly. Observe,

1. The place where,— *in the garden*; the very place where, not long before, they had enjoyed sweet communion with God, and received gracious evidences of his love to them; in the place where it was said, ye are my people, (Hos. i. 10,) in that very place was it said to them, ye are not my people; *in the garden*; the very place where they had sinned.

2. The Judge before whom,—**JEHOVAH**, God blessed for ever, who had authority to reckon with them; for though he gives not to us an account of any of his matters, yet he expects that we should give an account to him. 'Twas the God they had provoked, —whose law they had broken,—whose majesty they had offended,—whose love they had despised. 'Twas fit then that he should examine them about it.

3. The time when,—*in the cool of the day*; that is, in the afternoon, towards evening. God did not

come in the night;—that would have been much more dreadful and terrible: not in the heat of the day, but in the cool of the day, noting a calmness of spirit.

4. The manner of the Judge's coming,—not in thunder and lightning; no, the Lord was not in the fire, the Lord was not in the earthquake; 1 Kings xix. 11; but (as there, v. 12. so here,) in a still small voice. *Walking*,—not riding upon the wings of the wind, but walking; for he is slow to anger, though swift to show mercy. He did not, as men too often do, pass sentence rashly. They heard his voice; he gave them warning by this voice, which was like a trumpet sounded before the judge, to give the prisoners notice of his coming. Some think this voice was the thunder. Ps. xxix. 3. It was more probably God's calling, Adam, Adam; or, as some conceive, discoursing with himself concerning the sin of Adam, as he afterwards reasoned with sinful Jerusalem. Isa. v. 1—6.

5. The offenders' flight: *they hid themselves*; either for shame, because they were naked,—or for fear, because they were guilty. Flight argues guilt. Nothing is more desirable to a guilty sinner, than a hole to hide his head in, when an offended God comes. Rocks and mountains are welcome then. Rev. vi. 16. Before they sinned, it was otherwise with them:

then, if they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden, they would run to meet[him. But now the case was altered: he that was before a loving Father, was now become an angry Judge; and they were become afraid of nothing more than his sight and presence. This comes of sin.

Hide themselves from the presence of God. What madness was this, to think to hide themselves from Him from whom they could not hide themselves, all things being naked and open before him. Heb. iv. 13. What folly was it to fly from him whom they should have flown to; he being the God of all comfort and consolation. Rom. xv. 5. Did ever any hide himself from God and prosper? (Job xxxiv. 22. Amos ix. 3. Jer. xxiii. 24.) No, never.

9 And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where *art* thou?

Called. The word signifies to cry aloud; noting Adam's great distance from him. He must call aloud, before Adam—who was now dead in sin—could hear.

Where art thou? This was not an enquiring question, as if he did not know where he was; but a convincing, chiding question. *Where?* Not in what place?—but in what state? O Adam, Adam,

what hast thou done? Into what a sad condition hast thou plunged thyself by this sin of thine, that thou dost now fly from that God that before thou soughtest and lovedst! Think whither thy sin has brought thee! How art thou fallen, O Lucifer, son of the morning! Isa. xiv. 12. Some read it, *Alas for thee*, O Adam! Whether thou canst pity thyself or not, I cannot but pity thee; pity thy madness, pity thy misery, pity thy folly, pity thy fall.

10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because *I was naked*; and I hid myself.

We have here Adam's shuffling reply to God's question. He owns no more but what was manifest; confesses his flight,—the effect,—but suppresses his sin,—the cause. He doth not say, *I was afraid* because I was guilty,—but *because I was naked*; though that had been enough to prove him guilty; for before he sinned, his nakedness was not his shame. We say, blushing is the colour of virtue; but here 'twas the colour of sin.

11 And he said, Who told thee that thou *wast* naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?

Another startling question is here propounded by God to Adam. "I see that thou art ashamed of thy nakedness; but who told thee that thy nakedness was thy shame? How camest thou to know it? Was it not thine own sin that taught it thee?"

Hast thou exten? Now comes the question, guilty or not guilty; and, for Adam's further awakening, he is reminded of the law that had been given him: *whereof I commanded thee*. In the trial of malefactors, the statute which they have broken is sometimes read: so here. Sin is nowhere seen so plainly as in the glass of the command. *I commanded; I, thy Maker,—I, thy Master,—I, thy Benefactor.*

12 And the man said, the woman whom thou gavest *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

Adam knew 'twas to no purpose to plead not guilty, for the show of his countenance witnessed against him; and therefore he becomes his own accuser: *I did eat*. For all his shuffling and cutting, God drew it out of him at last; for when he judges, he will overcome. But this confession doth not look like a truly penitent confession; for he doth not take shame to himself, but stands upon his own justification, laying all the fault upon his wife: *she gave*

me of the tree. Nay, worse yet: 'twas *the woman whom thou gavest to be with me*; tacitly blaming God himself, as accessory to the sin. "Thou saidst it was not good for me to be alone; but it seems now it had been better for me to have been alone; for if thou hadst either left me without a wife, or given me a better, I should have done well enough." Thus doth one sin beget another. *The foolishness of man perverteth his way, and his heart fretteth against the Lord.* Prov. xix. 3.

13 And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this *that* thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

The woman's answer to this question is much like her husband's. He followed her example in sinning, and she followed his example in excusing it. Observe, she saith nothing of her tempting her husband to eat; that was such prodigious wickedness,—a sin of so deep a dye, that she could not for shame own it. She puts off the fault; *The serpent beguiled me.* The man lays all the blame upon the woman, and she upon the serpent. Sin is a brat that nobody is willing to own; a sign that it is no creditable thing. We are all, in this matter, like our first pa-

rents, ready enough to sin, and as ready when we have sinned to disown it, and lay the blame upon others: this is called *covering our transgression as Adam*, from which holy Job clears himself. Job xxxi. 33.

Beguiled me. All the devil's temptations are beguiling; he promises fair, but never performs; shows the bait, but hides the hook.

14 And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou *art* cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.

The offenders being found guilty by their own confession, besides the personal and infallible knowledge of the Judge, and nothing of weight being alleged to stay the sentence, the passing of that doth immediately follow. Adam was first examined and arraigned, because he was principally concerned, and because, being the head, from him better was expected. But he was last sentenced, because he last sinned. God begins with the serpent, because there the sin began. The serpent was sentenced without being tried, his ma-

lice and wickedness being so manifest and notorious.

This sentence passed upon the serpent hath a double aspect; it respects,

1. The creature which the devil made use of, that is, the serpent,—though it was an irrational creature,—to testify to Adam and Eve how much God was displeased with this sin. As when he made a law that if an ox killed a man, the ox should be stoned, (Exod. xxi. 28, 29,) to show how displeasing the sin of murder is to him,—so here.

Upon thy belly shalt thou go. Perhaps the serpent went upon his belly before; but now it became a curse to him: as the rainbow was before the flood, but not till then a sign of the covenant.

Dust shalt thou eat. This intimates scarcity. He is not far from being famished, that is, brought to eat dust. Eating dust notes also a base condition. Micah vii. 17. The serpent is a fit emblem of a covetous man: he crawls upon the ground, minds earthly things, eats the dust, and lives upon it; for what are gold and silver but yellow and white earth?

I will put enmity between thee and the woman. The serpent and the woman had been just now talking together as familiarly as could be; but now 'twas otherwise. Friendships, whose foundation is laid in sin, do many times presently end in mortal feuds.

2. The devil, the principal agent in the matter,

whose instrument the serpent was. The serpent is supposed to be principally aimed at in ver. 14, and the devil in ver. 15, such transitions being very frequent in sacred writ.

Those expressions in ver. 14, *upon thy belly shalt thou go*, and *dust shalt thou eat*, being applied to the devil, intimate to us that vile and base condition into which he is fallen. To lick the dust, is a scripture expression of ignominy and reproach. Ps. xliv. 25. lxxii. 9. Isa. xlix. 23. Lam. iii. 29. Mic. vii. 17. Pride is supposed to have been the first sin of the fallen angels, and here God lays them low enough.

Dust shalt thou eat. It is the meat and drink of the holy angels to do the will of God; they rejoice in the conversion of a sinner, which glorifies God; (Luke xv. 7;) but to the devil 'tis meat and drink to do mischief.

15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Some will by all means have *the woman*, here, to mean the Virgin Mary; and read it, *she* shall bruise thy head; but these are triflers. The enmity here spoken of was to begin immediately; whereas the Virgin Mary was not born till some thousands of

years after this. And I believe the Lord Jesus will give them no thanks for taking the crown off his head, though it be to put it on his mother's. By *the woman*, here, is plainly meant Eve. Not as if there were no enmity between Adam and the serpent: I dare say he hated the devil as much as Eve did, and there was no love lost between them. This enmity also descends in a sense to all the children of Eve; there is professed enmity between the devil and all mankind. The devil hates man, and thence he has his name,—Satan,—an adversary. He goes about seeking whom he may devour. 'Tis likewise natural to men to hate the devil. How great then is the folly of wicked men, who, notwithstanding this enmity, suffer themselves to be led by him.

By the *seed* of the serpent, the devil, are meant, (1.) All those unclean spirits which are the cursed inhabitants of the infernal pit; which are called the devil's angels, Matt. xxv. 41; attendants upon Beelzebub, the prince of the devils, and like him for malice and wickedness. (2.) All the reprobate. Wicked men are frequently, in scripture, called the devil's children. Acts xiii. 10. John viii. 44. 1 John iii. 10. Matt. xiii. 38. They are called by his name, they bear his image, they do his will, they submit to his appointments, they are like to receive their portion from him; and with him do they not

then deserve to be called the seed of the serpent,—a generation of vipers? Matt. iii. 7.

1. By the seed of the woman is principally meant Jesus Christ. And this is a good proof against those that denied his human nature; (such there were in the first ages of Christianity;) for if he were not really and truly a man, how was he the seed of the woman? It is a matter of great comfort, that our Redeemer is near of kin to us,—bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. Heb. ii. 11, 14.

2. The saints are secondarily meant by the seed of the woman; for if the seed of the serpent be to be taken collectively for all wicked men, why may not the seed of the woman be so taken for all godly people, subordinate to Christ? Why may not the church, the spouse, be taken with Christ, the husband? (Can. v. 1. Ephes. v. 32;) the church, the body, with Christ, the head? (Col. i. 18 ;) the church, the army, with Christ, the Captain, (Heb. ii. 10,) in this enmity?

Between these two parties the enmity was thus put in the beginning of the Bible, and we find it continuing to work in the close of the Bible,—viz. in Rev. xii. 7, where Michael and his angels,—that is, Christ and his saints, are said to have fought with the dragon and his angels,—that is, the devil and wicked men.

(1.) The enmity between the saints and the devil is clear. He has great wrath towards them, Rev. xii. 12; he accuses them, Rev. xii. 10; he seeks to devour them, 1 Pet. v. 8. And their enmity against him is plain too. They wrestle with him, Ephes. vi. 12; they resist him, 1 Pet. v. 9; they pray against him, Matt. vi. 13; they overcome him, 1 John ii. 14.

(2.) The enmity between saints and wicked men is also clear. Did not David hate those that hate God? Ps. cxxxix. 21, 22. And on the other hand, did not Ahab hate good Micaiah? 1 Kings xxii. 8. Why then shall we wonder at the persecutions which wicked men (the devil's instruments) have raised in all ages, and do still raise, against the people of God? Alas! they are the genuine products of the old enmity which God himself put between the serpent's and the woman's seed.

The fruits of this enmity are here recorded :

I. *It shall bruise thy head*; that is, the seed of the woman shall; Christ principally, and the saints subordinately under him,—for even they shall overcome the wicked one. This victory over Satan Christ obtains,

1. By his death and sufferings; a strange way of conquest,—but it is Christ's way. Heb. ii. 14. Col. ii. 15.

2. By the breath of his mouth, in the preaching

of the gospel, which tends to, and shall at last end in, the subversion of the devil's kingdom. Luke x. 18.

3. By the brightness of his coming into the hearts of his people, by his Spirit and grace, Luke xi. 21, 22; and of his coming to judge the world at the last day.

The saints bruise Satan's head by resisting his temptations, James iv. 7; repelling his motions, Eph. vi. 11; and quenching his fiery darts, Eph. vi. 16; which they do only and purely in the strength of Christ; Phil. iv. 13. 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10; for *we are more than conquerors through him that loved us*. Rom. viii. 37. 'Tis he that treads *Satan under our feet*. Rom. xvi. 20.

II. *Thou shalt bruise his heel*. If a serpent's head be trod upon, 'tis two to one that the foot that doth it, goes away with a bruise. By the heel of Christ is meant,

1. His human nature,—which the devil, by his instruments, bruised, in the sufferings of Jesus; not in his last sufferings only, though in them chiefly, but in all his sufferings from the cradle to the cross. Satan entered not only into Judas, to betray Christ, —but into Pilate, to condemn him,—and into the soldiers, to crucify him. All this was done at the

devil's instigation, with the design of hindering the redemption of mankind.

2. His saints on earth, the lower part of the mystical body of Christ, which the devil makes it his business to bruise: (1.) By temptations; when he trips up their heels in their conflicts with him, and foils them, (as he doth too often,) in their spiritual combats, making them to fall into gross acts of sin. This bruises them; breaks their bones; almost breaks their hearts. (2.) By persecutions: when he cannot stir up the saints to provoke God, he stirs up his instruments to persecute them. 'Tis the devil that shall cast some of them into prison; (Rev. ii. 10;) and many thousands of God's children has he bruised to death in all ages. But, blessed be God, while the heel is bruised on earth, the head is safe in heaven.

This was the first promise of Christ that ever was made, and though it was very dark, and hard to be understood by the saints then, (plain as it is to us now,) yet, no doubt, God did give Adam an insight into the mystery of it, and show him something concerning a Christ to come. The great goodness of God to Adam in this, is very observable. As soon as ever the wound was made, the remedy was revealed; nay, before God proceeded to pass sentence upon Adam and Eve, he here opened to them a door of hope, or I question whether they could have heard

that sentence and not have sunk down in despair.

16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception: in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire *shall be* to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

The sentence passed upon the woman is twofold:

1. That she should have sorrow in bringing forth children. The pains of child-bearing are great to a proverb,—a scripture proverb; and they came in with sin, of which they are the sad effects. Pleasure was the temptation; pain the punishment. In this there is a mixture of mercy with wrath. 'Twas wrath that there should be sorrow; but mercy that it was to be in bringing forth children; and when the pain is over, it is quite forgotten, for joy that a man is born into the world. John xvi. 21.

2. That she should be in subjection to her husband. There was wrath that another was to rule her, but mercy that that other was her husband; not a stranger, not an enemy. Her sin was—tempting her husband; her punishment—subjection to her husband. She was (in a sense) a devil to tempt him, and now he was made (in a sense) a god to rule her.

17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: *cursed is the ground for thy sake: in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;*

Adam sinned last, and therefore he was sentenced last. Observe that it is not said to him, as it was to the serpent, *thou art cursed*; (no, God hath blessings in store for Adam;) but *cursed is the ground*,—that ground out of which he was at first made. We find one saying of the second Adam, *Blessed is the womb that bare thee*; Luke xi. 27; but here God doth in effect say of the first Adam, *cursed is the womb that bare thee*. The world was made for the sake of man, and now 'twas cursed for his sake.

18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee: and thou shalt eat the herb of the field.

The fruit of this curse was the bringing forth of thorns and thistles. Not but that they were created before, with the rest of the plants. But then they were in their place; no blemish, but an ornament to

the ground. Now they became troublesome to man in his tilling of it.

Man had hitherto had liberty to eat of the fruits of the garden; but now the herb of the field must serve. He was now turned to graze on the common.

19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Had it not been for sin, it had been more easy to labour than now it is to rest. The pains came in with sin: *in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread*. Surely they do not deserve to eat bread that pass their days in sloth and idleness, contrary to the apostle's rule. 2 Thess. iii. 10.

Observe here also how the cup is mixed. Here's wrath,—that there should be toil and sorrow; but mercy,—that it is in order to eat bread; and that this is not to last always, but *till thou return unto the ground*. He should toil while he lived, but he should be quiet enough in the grave; *there the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest*. Job iii. 17. 'Tis a mercy that, seeing our days are evil, they are but few; and that we are not to live

for ever in a world of trouble. Job vii. 16.

How humble should man be, that was not only made of dust, but is dust itself. If Adam had not sinned, he should not have died,—being made immortal by the gift of God, upon condition of perfect obedience; which condition, he not performing, lost the benefit, and became mortal. Death came into the world at the heels of sin; so that in the dust of the grave,—in the skulls of the charnel house,—we may see, as in a glass, the sad fruits and effects of sin; that the wages of sin is death. Rom. vi. 23.

From the whole we learn,

1. What an evil and a bitter thing it is to depart from God; that sin unavoidably brings down the wrath of God; and that that wrath is intolerable.

2. What a sad condition every one of us is born in; that we are children of wrath, and heirs of the curse and condemnation. 'Tis good to be often remembering this rock whence we are hewn, and this hole of the pit whence we are digged. Isa. li. 1.

20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.

Hitherto we have found her mentioned by no other name but *the woman*, and *his wife*; but now

she hath another name, and that of Adam's imposing, which was a token of her further subjection to him. *Eve* signifies *life*; and the reason of this name being given is here rendered, *because she was the mother of all living*. Some think this is mentioned as an instance of Adam's folly, in giving his wife such a glorious name, when he and she both were in such misery. Others take it in a good sense, and consider that Adam comforted himself in the hope of the promised Messiah, who was to be the seed of the woman, and was to quicken and enliven those whom Adam by sin had made dead. Put *Adam*,—*red earth*, and *Eve*,—*life*, together, and they make a man; for what is man but enlivened clay?

21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

It is a special instance of God's great care of our first parents that, bad as they were, he provided not only food, but also raiment, for them. Thus doth he in the midst of wrath remember mercy. They had provided for themselves fig leaves,—clothing that would last but a while; but God made them coats of skins, which were wider, warmer, and more durable. Such is the difference between our righteous-

ness and Christ's: our own is like fig leaves,—*a covering narrower than we can wrap ourselves in*, as the prophet speaks. Isa. xxviii. 20. Christ's righteousness, like these coats of skins, is large and lasting. 'Tis a garment of God's making, 1 Cor. i. 30; but we must put it on. Gal. iii. 27.

Coats; that is, plain clothing, without any of those impertinencies which the wanton wit of man hath since invented. Isa. iii. 18.

Of skins; the skins of beasts slain for the purpose: not silk, or satin, or velvet,—but plain skins. Though Adam was then the greatest man in the world, yet see how meanly God his father clad him.

The beasts whose skins these were, some think were killed in sacrifice, which was certainly an instituted way of worship not much younger than Adam. "The first thing that dies in the world, is a sacrifice, or Christ in a figure."—LIGHTFOOT.

The killing of these beasts at this time, for this purpose, was perhaps to remind Adam and Eve of their mortality; that whenever they looked at their clothes, they might think of dying.

22 And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of

the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever :

Here's the execution of the sentence: for God's threatenings are not bugbears to frighten children and fools, but real things. *As one of us, to know good and evil.* Knowledge is a divine thing: the more we have of it, the more we are like to God.

And now lest he put forth. Adam having lost the promise of immortality, there was reason why he should be deprived of the benefit of the tree of life, which was the seal of that promise. The tree of life was sacramental; and now God did for sin excommunicate Adam,—debar him from the sacrament.

23 Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.

Paradise was no longer a place for Adam, now he was become a sinful Adam. He had forfeited his Eden privileges, and was therefore expelled the fruitful garden, and must take up with the barren common, where he had less pleasure and more toil,—where he would soon find the difference between the trees of Eden and the herbs of the field.

24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

Care was taken, not only to put out Adam, but to keep him out, by placing a Cherubim with a flaming sword in his hand, to keep the tree of life. Here we see one sad effect of sin; that by it the holy angels became enemies to man, who before were ministering spirits sent abroad for his good. The angels are enemies to those to whom God is an enemy. When man fell out with God, he fell out with the angels too.

The flaming sword in the angels' hand was to be a standing evidence to Adam that God was angry with him; and that, though he did not for the present inflict the threatened death upon him, yet there were no hopes to attain the forfeited life in the former way.

By these cherubims and this flaming sword, it is intimated to us, that the way of spotless innocency was now no longer the way to acceptance with God, either for Adam or any of his children. So that those that hope to be saved by their own perfect, personal, and perpetual obedience, will prove mis-

taken; for though that was the way once, yet now it is so no more. There are no hopes of getting to heaven without a mediator; and if a mediator had not been appointed, we must certainly have fallen short of that happiness. But the Lord Jesus hath been pleased to lay open for us, a new and living way unto the Father; (Heb. x. 20;) nay, to show us the way to the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God. Rev. ii. 7. xxii. 14. Indeed he himself is the true and living way; and no man comes to the Father,—to the love and favour, to the kingdom and glory, of the Father,—but by him. John xiv. 6.

CHAPTER IV.

The story of this chapter divides itself into eight parts: I. The birth and calling of Cain and Abel, who were the two sons,—'tis supposed the two eldest sons,—of Adam and Eve; II. Their religious devotion, with the different success and acceptance of it; III. Cain's angry resentment of God's different acceptance of their services; IV. God's reproof of Cain for this anger; V. The progress of Cain's wrath in Abel's murder; VI. The proceedings against Cain for this murder; VII. An account of Cain's posterity; VIII. The birth of a son and grandson of Adam.

AND Adam knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD.

It is supposed by some that Cain and Abel were twins; and if so, they did somewhat resemble Esau and Jacob, another pair of twin brothers;—the two

younger loved and accepted, the two elder hated and rejected. The name given to Cain by his mother signifies *possession or getting*. *I have gotten*,—'tis an expression of her gladness; for though she bore him in sorrow, according to the threatening chap. iii. 16, yet the sorrow was not remembered for joy that a man was born into the world.

A man from the Lord; some read it, *a man before the Lord*; that is, one that may stand up to serve God in his generation, when we are dead and gone.

Others read it, *a man, the Lord*; as if she thought this was the promised seed that was to bruise the serpent's head. But she lived to see herself mistaken, when this son proved the first-born of the devil himself. 1 John iii. 12. See how often God suffers us to be disappointed in our expectations from creatures; to find trouble and sorrow in that from which we promised ourselves the greatest joy and comfort. Therefore *cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils*. Isa. ii. 22.

We read it, *a man from the Lord*; that is, from the goodness and mercy of the Lord; Gen. xxx. 24. xxxiii. 5; and then it speaks Eve's thankfulness for this son. She returned the praise to him from whom she had him, for children are the heritage of the Lord. Psa. cxxvii. 3.

2 And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

When Eve had Cain, the promised seed, as she thought him, she called her next son *Abel*, which signifies *vanity*. Those that have Christ for theirs, see every thing else in the world to be but vanity. A cup of water is but a vain thing to him that hath an ocean.

Or it may be that Eve, having missed of the comfort she hoped for in Cain, and seeing that he did not prove to be the promised seed, did therefore call her next son *vanity*. And 'twere well if we could, as she did, from the disappointment of our expectations from creatures, learn more and more the vanity of them. Though all experience, yet how few are there that believe, the vanity, emptiness, nothingness, of present things.

From the joining of these two names together, *Cain—possession*, and *Abel—vanity*, we learn that all our possessions in this world are vanity. Children, which are to be ranked amongst the chiefest of earthly blessings, are at best but vanity,—very uncertain things to trust to. Parents promise themselves that their children will be arrows in their hands; (Ps. cxxvii. 4;) their safety and honour:

but, alas! how often do they prove arrows in their hearts,—their grief and sorrow. And 'tis so with every thing else under the sun. How justly then may we write *Abel* upon all our creature-comforts, for *vanity of vanities, all is vanity*; Eccles. i. 2 : nay, *man himself at his best state is altogether vanity*. Ps. xxxix. 5.

Abel, from whom it should seem, by his name, Eve promised herself little comfort, proved a child of God, a favourite of heaven, and an heir of glory; and, no question, was upon that account a great comfort to her: whilst Cain, in whom she expected so much joy, proved a wicked man, a hater of God, and a murderer of his brother; and doubtless was, upon that account, a great affliction to her. Thus did God cross her expectations both ways, to show that he seeth not as man seeth,—judgeth not as man judgeth. 1 Sam. xvi. 7.

Abel was a keeper of sheep,—Cain, a tiller of the ground. Though they were the eldest sons of Adam, and heirs to all the world, yet they were not without callings. A calling God had given Adam, and callings he would give his children. Their callings were mean callings; the one a grazier's, and the other a ploughman's; and yet they did not think these so far below them as many now-a-days do, that have not the tithe of their estate. But they were neces-

sary callings; not to feed luxury and maintain pride, but to get food convenient for themselves and their families.

Those parents do not as Adam and Eve did, that turn their children into the world without a calling; so setting them as butts for the devil, that subtle archer, to shoot his fiery darts at. Idleness has been the ruin of thousands. 'Twas the advice which holily Mr. Dod gave to a father that was in care concerning the disposal of his children, "Give each of them a Bible and a calling, and God be with them."

Observe the difference between the calling of Cain and Abel. Cain, like a covetous worldling, chooses that calling that he was most likely to get by, and to enrich himself with; whilst Abel (good man) makes choice of that calling which would most dispose him for, and least hinder him in, the service and worship of God. A pastoral life is commonly observed to be attended with fewest incumbrances, and to afford not time only, but opportunity for secret communion with God. That calling is to be chosen as really best for us which is best for our souls, and may most further us in heaven's way.

Further observe, that though Abel was the younger brother, yet it should seem, by the order of this story, that he entered into his calling first; his keeping his sheep is mentioned before Cain's tilling the ground.

Perhaps Cain had spent his days in idleness if Abel had not set him a good copy, in the choice of a calling. By which we may see the prevalency of a good example, many times, upon the worst men. Cain, that would not be reasoned into a calling perhaps, by his father and mother, yet is soon shamed into one, when he sees his younger brother so busy before him.

3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering to the Lord.

4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof.

In process of time. Heb. *At the end of days*; which some think points at some certain stated time; for certainly even then the people of God were not without a stated time for worship. *At the end of days*; that is, on the sabbath day, which was at the end of the days of the week; or at the year's end; on some yearly solemnity which they were taught to observe, perhaps on some solemn remembrance of the fall. Or at the year's end, when they had gathered in the harvest; when they perceived that God had blessed them, they came, as 'twas fit they should, with their thank-offerings.

Cain, a wicked man, had his offering as ready as

Abel, a good man. Outward duties of religion may be performed by the bad, even as by the good. The hypocrite doth often go as far, every jot, in outward performances as the true Christian; hears as many sermons,—offers up as many prayers,—gives as much alms,—and is yet a hypocrite all the while. The bare performance of these duties doth not, cannot render a man acceptable to the heart-searching God. Nay, it should seem that Cain came with his offering before Abel; and is it not common for hypocrites to be as forward to perform outward duties as the true Christian? If the Pharisee and the publican go up to the temple to pray, the Pharisee will be sure to be there first. Luke xviii. 10.

From the offerings of Cain and Abel, we learn the antiquity of religious worship. The service of God is no novelty. I know there is an old way which wicked men have trodden; Job xxii. 15; but old as it is, the way of religion and godliness is older. *Ask for the old paths.* Jer. vi. 16. The devil was not up so soon, but God was up before him.

Grotius thinks that reason taught them that, seeing God was the best, they should honour him, by parting with the best they had to him and for him. Religion is agreeable with the principles of right reason.

But I rather think that God did in an immediate

way reveal this manner of worship to Adam, and that he taught it to his sons. Otherwise, without a warrant, how could they expect that God should own them in it? for, doubtless, uninstituted worship is unaccepted worship. How could Abel offer in faith, if he had no divine revelation upon which to ground that faith? Heb. xi. 4.

“I cannot see how natural light should dictate that God would accept of the blood of other creatures as a token of man’s obedience to himself.” “Cain’s sacrifice seems more agreeable to natural light than Abel’s, being a eucharistical offering, without hurt to other creatures. Abel’s was a bloody sacrifice, but it was offered in faith; (Heb. xi. 4;) which is a higher principle than natural light, and must suppose a divine revelation.”—STILLINGFLEET.

“As to eucharistical sacrifices, such as the first-fruits and the like oblations, men’s own reason might suggest and persuade them that it was fit to present them, as the most natural signification of a thankful mind; and thus far there might be sacrifices in a state of innocence. But sin having changed the scene, expiatory sacrifices must be founded upon a positive institution, because pardon of sin being a matter of pure grace and favour, whatever was a means to signify and convey that, must be appointed by God himself.”—CAYE.

It was a great mercy of God to Adam, to reveal unto him this method of obtaining acceptance with himself; that, when he had lost by sin the tree of life, (which, whilst he had it, was a standing pledge of the divine favour,) God was graciously pleased to put him in a way of worship by sacrificing, which was to be, and no doubt was to him, an evidence of the restitution of that forfeited favour. And it was well done of Adam to teach his children this way. He did not, as too many fathers do, provide only for their comfortable subsistence in this world, by putting them in a calling; but he provided also for their souls' subsistence in a better world, by putting them in a way of worshipping God. Contrary to this is the preposterous care of many parents;—care which was very commendable, if their children had bodies only, and no souls to look after. Adam, like Abraham, did command his children that they should keep the way of the Lord. Gen. xviii. 19. See Ephes. vi. 4.

And the LORD had respect unto
Abel and to his offering :

5 But unto Cain and to his offering
he had not respect. And Cain was
very wroth, and his countenance fell.

Hitherto Cain and Abel have gone together; but now we must part them. They both brought their offerings, but they were not both accepted; like the Pharisee and the publican. Luke xviii. 14.

The Lord had respect unto Abel; was well pleased with him,—*looked on* him, as the word is; cast a gracious eye of favour upon him. Now this is the great thing we should aim at and labour after in all we do,—especially in religious duties,—to be accepted of the Lord. 2 Cor. v. 9. Abel had not only comfort in his own conscience, by the secret whispers of the Spirit of God, saying, “Well done;” but also credit before others: for that it was evidenced in some way seems to be clear from Heb. xi. 4,—*he obtained witness, God testifying of his gifts.* How he testified of them doth not appear; whether by a voice from heaven, or, as others think, by blessing Abel’s possessions, and not Cain’s; or, as is most probably conjectured, by fire from heaven, which consumed Abel’s sacrifice, and not Cain’s. That seems to have been the way by which God was wont to evidence his acceptance of sacrifices; as of Abraham’s, Gen. xv. 17; of Manoah’s, Judg. xiii. 20; of Elijah’s, 1 Kings xviii. 38; of Gideon’s, Judg. vi. 21; and of Solomon’s, 2 Chron. vii. 1. And here, that which we render *had respect*, some render he *kindled*: also in Ps. xx. 3, that which

the text reads *accept*, the margin reads *turn to ashes*. No sacrifices are acceptable to God, but those that are kindled with fire from heaven. God himself works in us all the works that he is well pleased with.

Why did God accept Abel and not Cain? What reason was there for it? *Of a truth, I perceive, saith Peter, that God is no respecter of persons.* Acts x. 34. This difference was not without good cause. When there was a difference in the duty, 'twas fit there should be a difference in the success. God showed himself to be no respecter of persons in that he preferred the younger brother, that offered aright, before the elder brother, that did not.

1. Some think there was a difference in the quality of *the offerings*. Both brought that which appertained to their callings; and 'twas well to offer of that in which God had blessed them. 1 Cor. xvi.

2. But of Cain it is said that he *brought of the fruit of the ground*; any thing next to hand,—no matter what; some of the light corn, or some that he had not occasion for, but had been left at the year's end. But Abel took more care: he *brought of the firstlings of the flock*; that is, the choicest and best that he had: *and of the fat thereof*; that is, the best of those best. The principle that Abel went upon was, that he that is the best should have the best; and therefore he would not, he did not, vow

and sacrifice unto the Lord a corrupt thing: he did not bring the torn, and the lame, and the sick, for sacrifice; for he knew that was evil. Deut. xv. 21.

Those that think to deceive God, by putting him off with any thing worthless in his service, will prove in the end but to deceive themselves. But those that offer as Abel offered,—that bring the best they have, and are sorry they can bring no better,—are like to speed as Abel sped; to be, like him, accepted of the Lord. God must have *the firstlings*; the first of our time, and the first of our strength. God must have *the fat*,—the best service, the most inward worship.

2. Others think the difference was in the quality of *the offerers*, and in the principles upon which they acted in this service. (1.) Abel was a justified person: so was not Cain. 'Tis said, *the Lord had respect to Abel and his offering*. Observe, first to Abel, and then to his offering. Under the covenant of works in the state of innocency, the respect was had, first, to the deed, and then to the doer, for the deed's sake; first, to the performance, and then to the person for the performance's sake. But under the new covenant, the order is inverted. First, respect is had to the person as a chosen vessel, a member of Christ, and then to the performance for the sake of the person, or rather for the sake of

Christ, *the great High Priest of our profession*, (Heb. iii. 1,) in whom only God is (if he be at all) well pleased with us. But as for that man that is out of Christ,—unconverted, unregenerate, such a one as Cain was,—nothing that he doth is acceptable to God. His plowing is sin; Prov. xxi. 4; nay, his praying is sin; *the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord*; Prov. xv. 8; and for that very reason,—because he is wicked; *for a good man obtaineth favour of the Lord*. Prov. xii. 2. (2.) Abel offered in faith: so did not Cain. This was the distinguishing mark: the Holy Ghost tells us so. *By faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain*; Heb. xi. 4; that is, Abel had an eye to God in what he did,—to the will and command of God as his rule, to the honour and glory of God as his end. Abel offered by faith in the promised Messiah, the great gospel sacrifice, by virtue of which only, all other sacrifices and offerings are accepted.

It is faith alone that puts an excellency upon all our offerings. Our services are pleasing to God no further than they are done with an eye to Christ. Upon that great altar must all our sacrifices be offered, or there is no acceptance.

Cain angrily resented God's different acceptance of their services. He was wroth. There are eight

words in Hebrew, they tell us, which signify anger; and that which is here used notes the most vehement indignation, the highest degree of anger. -The reason of this anger was, because his brother's offering was accepted, and his own was not: or, as the Apostle expresses it, *because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.* 1 John iii. 12. He was angry at God, as if he had done him wrong in not accepting him. He was angry with his brother for—I know not what. He was vexed at the disgrace that was cast upon him; vexed to see his younger brother preferred before him; vexed to see a visible testimony given to his brother's works, and not to his own. This was great wickedness in Cain; and that which was at the bottom of it was, pride of heart,—which is evermore the companion of hypocrisy. That heart that is swelled up with pride, will, upon the least disgrace, be ready to burst with anger. Cain's anger discovered itself in his looks: *his countenance fell.* Where anger is burning like fire in the heart, it will appear like flame or smoke in the countenance. What a change do the heats of passion make in the very faces of men! so that if they would but look at their face in a glass, they could not but be ashamed.

6 And the LORD said unto Cain,

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Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

It is an instance of the condescending patience of God, that he would stoop so low as to reason the matter with Cain. Just like the father with the elder brother that repined and murmured at the acceptance of the younger. Luke xv. 28. Herein God deals with men as men,—as rational creatures. God spoke to Cain, either by an audible voice, (which seems most agreeable to that dispensation,) or by the voice of Cain's conscience; the language of his heart smiting him for his sin,—which is the way that God takes now in his reasoning with sinners. There is more work of that kind doing in the world than we are aware of;—the Spirit convincing of sin in a spiritual way.

Why is thy countenance fallen? God takes notice of our countenance; he observes what our looks are. There's not a wanton look, not an envious look, not a repining look, not a wrathful look, that escapes his observing eye.

7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee *shall be* his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

God proceeds to show Cain the unreasonableness of his anger: "If thou wilt be angry, thou must be angry with thyself; for 'twas thine own fault that thou wast not accepted." This verse affords us a proof of the justice and righteousness of God in the government of the world, and is an exposition of those words of the psalmist, *thou renderest to every man according to his work*. Psal. lxxii. 12. Divine justice holds the scale with an impartial hand, dealing rewards and punishments according to the rule of righteousness.

1. On the one hand, *if thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?* No doubt thou shalt. Even thou, O Cain, though I have rejected thee now, yet if thou wilt repent and amend, and do as Abel did, this rejection shall be no bar in the way of thy future acceptance.

If thou doest well. Many do *facere bonum*, that do not *facere bene*; do that which is good, but do it not well. They pray—that is good; but they do not pray well: hear the word—that is good; but do not hear it well: and so of other duties. But the holy God looks at the manner as well as the matter of our performances; which is the sense of that saying of Luther, "God loves adverbs."

Shalt thou not be accepted? "Though thou hast not done this well, yet if thou wilt do another thing

well,—viz. believe and repent, and make thy peace, all shall be well; there's a pardon ready for thee." One end of sacrificing was the forgiveness of sin. Lev. vi. 6, 7.

2. On the other hand, *If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door*. God doth here set before Cain life and death, blessing and cursing. His sin was one of omission, but he cannot stop himself there; that omission will beget a commission. If sin lies at the door, when one (seemingly little) sin has opened the door, all the rest will come rushing in. Sins are like circles in the water, when a stone is thrown into it; one begets one another. When anger was in Cain's heart, murder was not far off.

The word translated *sin* is sometimes rendered a *sin-offering*, as in Exod. xxx. 10. Lev. ix. 15. "Though thou hast not done well, yet be not cast down and dejected: the sin-offering is at the door; the remedy is at hand; the propitiation is not far to seek. If thou dost repent, there's a pardon even for the iniquity of thy holy things; there's a way to acceptance, and 'tis at the door." Christ, the great sin-offering, is said to stand at the door, Rev. iii. 20; ready to come in, if we will open to him. And do not they deserve to perish for their sins, that will not step to the door for a share in the sin-offering? "As God had read the first lecture of faith to Adam in the

promise of Christ, Gen. iii. 15; so doth he read the first lecture of repentance to Cain, under the doctrine of a sin-offering."—LIGHTFOOT.

The same word in Hebrew signifies *sin* and *punishment*,—to show how near of kin they are to one another. If sin be in the house, punishment is at the door. To be at the door is a scripture phrase for a thing at hand. Matt. xxiv. 33. Jam. v. 9. Though thou dost not fear the sword of human justice, yet thou wilt have reason to fear the arrest of divine justice. *Sin lies at the door*, like a fierce mastiff, ready to seize upon the sinner whenever he stirs out of doors: wherever he goes, his sin will be sure to meet him; the guilt of it crying for the punishment of it. It *lies*, as if it *slept*: *I kept silence*, saith God, Ps. l. 21: but it *lies at the door*. That's a very unquiet place to sleep in, and the least noise will be sure to wake it; the opening of the door will rouse the mastiff,—and then, sinner, look to thyself, for be sure thy sin will find thee out, first or last, sooner or later. Num. xxxii. 23.

And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. The latter of these phrases is exegetical of the former: unto thee shall be his desire; that is, thou shalt rule over him,—as is clear by comparing this passage with chap. iii. 16; but to what it refers, interpreters do not agree. It is generally un-

derstood of Abel; and then the meaning is, "I know that which troubles thy carnal heart is, fear of losing thy birthright privileges hereby; but never fear: Abel is thy younger brother still; and, as such, is thy inferior, and to be subject to thee. My preferring him before thee in the matter of my own worship and service, doth not, shall not, take away that civil honour and respect which he owes to thee as his elder brother; and therefore be not angry at that, —let not thy countenance fall for that."

God's putting a difference between some and others in the dispensing of spiritual gifts and graces, doth by no means warrant the withholding of civil respects as they are due. Believing servants are, for this reason, often cautioned by the apostle to be subject even to unbelieving masters; for religion (however many now-a-days may think otherwise) doth not pluck up the hedge of common civility.

8 And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

Anger, which is heart-murder, is a bad step towards, and doth often end in, hand-murder. Our Master tells us so, Matt. v. 21, 22; the apostle John

tells us so, 1 John iii. 15. The beginning of sin is a dangerous thing, even as when one lets out water; Pr. xvii. 14: therefore leave it off before it be meddled with. When once the dam is broken, how wide the water will soon make it, who can tell? Let but the old serpent get in his head, and he'll soon wind in his whole body. 'Tis wisdom to withstand the first motions of sin, particularly of anger; because who knows whither it tends, and where 'twill end? The cockatrice is best crushed in the egg.

'Tis said, *Cain talked with Abel his brother*; either, 1. Crossly and passionately, thereby seeking occasion of executing his malicious design. Quarrelling words do oftentimes make way for blows. Many a murder hath taken its rise from ill language. Or, 2. Lovingly and familiarly, as brethren are wont to do, that so Abel might be secure, expecting no danger. This made it so much the worse, like Judas' betraying his Master with a kiss. But 'tis no new thing for foul sins to have fair pretensions. Thus Joab killed Abner, and Absalom killed Amnon. The Septuagint tells us that Cain said to Abel, *Let us go into the field*. I suppose Abel did not understand it (as the Hectors of these times would, have understood it) as a challenge. If he hadt doubtless he would not have been so ready to accept it. It seems by this that Cain was the first dueller;

a sorry copy to write after. The Chaldee paraphrase gives us another account of their discourse; namely, that it was upon some points of religion. Cain thought, because his sacrifice not accepted, that there was no judge of the world,—no time of retribution,—no reward for the good,—no punishment for the bad. Abel affirmed the contrary, stood up for the truth,—and that gave occasion to Cain to despatch him. Death met with Abel when he was in the field about his calling. There's no place on this side heaven exempt from the stroke of death.

Cain's sin was a very great sin,—a sin of the first magnitude. He did not learn it by imitation. Who ever set such a copy before him? No: there's no sin which we have not the seed and principle of in our very nature. This sin of Cain's was aggravated, 1. From the relationship of the murdered,—that it was his own brother, perhaps his twin-brother. If this aggravates slander, (Ps. l. 20,) much more does it aggravate murder. 2. From the reason—*because*, says the apostle, *his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous*. 1 John iii. 12. He hated him because God loved him; slew him because God accepted him. The blood he shed was not only innocent blood, but righteous blood; nay, and shed (as a great deal of blood since hath been) for righteousness' sake. This is the first-recorded instance of the

old enmity that there is between the wicked and the godly; 'twas put, chap. iii. 15; and now it began to work; now the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent began to quarrel; and this quarrel hath been kept up ever since, and is likely to continue as long as there is an Abel,—a saint,—out of heaven, and a Cain,—a wicked man,—out of hell. What little reason have we then to think sufferings for righteousness' sake strange things. As to Abel, I hesitate not to say that it was his honour; for hereby he became the first that wore the martyr's crown. 'Tis Abel's privilege to lead the van in the noble army of martyrs. He is supposed to be the first that died. The first that went to the grave went to heaven. God would not let the devil have the first-fruits. Death, that was the wages of sin, first lights upon a saint; for saintship, though it quits from the sting, yet it doth not free from the stroke, of death. Nay, he that died first, died for his religion; so early did martyrdom come into the world.

9 And the LORD said unto Cain, Where *is* Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: *Am* I my brother's keeper?

This question is put to Cain to bring him to a

sight and sense of his sin, and (if it might be) to sorrow for it. Perhaps it was at church the next sabbath after, when Adam's family came together to worship God; and Abel, (who doubtless was wont to give his constant attendance upon those ordinances) being missing, God comes to Cain, to examine him where his brother was. The God of heaven observes who is present at, and who is absent from, public ordinances.

Abel thy brother. God reminds Cain of this relationship, to aggravate his sin: thy brother, whom thou wast obliged, by the bond of nature itself, to love and take care of; but thou (unnatural wretch!) hast broken that bond asunder.

And he said, I know not. That was a downright lie, for he did know. This is another instance of that truth that the way of sin is downhill, and one iniquity the cause of another. When a fault is committed, how often is a lie thought needful to conceal it! "That fault that needs it most, grows two thereby." —HERBERT. Observe the folly of Cain in thinking to hide his sin from the all-seeing eye of the heart-searching God, by a lie. He covered his sin; but did it prosper? No: *he that covereth his sins shall not prosper.* Prov. xxviii. 14.

Am I my brother's keeper? Have not I business of my own to look after,—ground to tend,—and

a plough to follow? what am I concerned in him? This manner of speaking was unbecoming for a creature to use to the Creator,—the potsherd to the Potter. Confessing his fault, justifying God, judging himself, would have become him better. See whose language they speak that excuse themselves from the great duty of watching over one another; that say they have enough to do to look to their own matters, and are not concerned with their neighbours'. The apostle teaches us another lesson: *look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.* Philip. ii. 4. Some think that Cain doth herein tacitly charge his sin upon the providence of that God with whose nature it is inconsistent to be the author of sin. *Am I my brother's keeper?* No, Lord; thou art his keeper; thou didst in effect take him into thy protection when thou hadst respect unto him and his offering. Why then dost thou examine me concerning him?

10 And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

What hast thou done? What a wicked thing in itself; how provoking to God! What a great deal of guilt hast thou contracted by this sin! Dost thou know, hast thou considered seriously, what thou hast

done?—what a gracious God thou hast offended,—what a righteous law thou hast broken,—what a precious soul thou hast wounded,—what a loving brother thou hast murdered? The evidence against thee is clear and convincing; *the voice of thy brother's blood crieth*. The blood that was shed on earth cried so loud as to be heard in heaven. We have the language of this cry in Rev. vi. 10. Blood calls for blood; the blood of the murdered for the blood of the murderer. Sin committed calls to divine justice for punishment to be inflicted; and divine justice hath an open ear to those calls. All sin is crying; but especially blood. All blood is crying; but especially the blood of a brother,—an innocent brother,—a righteous brother.

From the ground. Cain no doubt buried the blood, and 'tis likely the body, lest his sin should thereby be discovered; but murder will cry out. He did not bury them so deep but their cry could be heard as far as heaven.

11 And now *art* thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand.

Adam had the curse but at second-hand;—the

ground was cursed for his sake : but Cain was the immediate object of it ;—now art *thou* cursed. God had mercy in store for Adam, but none for Cain. The curse of God is the due desert of every sin : *cursed is every one that continueth not in all things.* Gal. iii. 10. A little word, but inclusive of all misery in this world, and in that which is to come ; for as those whom God blesses, are blessed indeed ; so those whom he curses, are cursed indeed. And under this curse must every one abide that lives and dies without an interest in him that *was made a curse for us.* Gal. iii. 13.

From the earth ; from thence the cry came up to God, from thence the curse came up to Cain. “Though I that am the Lord of Hosts could deal with thee by an immediate stroke from heaven ; though I could send an angel to take vengeance on thee, or a thunderbolt or hailstone to destroy thee, yet will I not take that course with thee. The earth,—that earth in which thy trading lies, that earth out of which thy father was made, and into which thou must return, shall be unto thee the avenger of blood.”

Which has opened her mouth to receive. The earth by drinking in the blood of Abel, thought for very shame to hide that which she could not hinder. She blushed to see her own face dyed with such blood. Abel’s grandmother—earth—being in that respect

more kind to him than his own brother Cain; the earth, saith God, that, out of a detestation of the murder, drunk in the blood, shall, out of a detestation of the murderer, be a curse to thee.

12 When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforh yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

The ground was cursed to Adam before, but it was here doubly cursed to Cain; for besides the general curse remaining upon the whole, there was an additional curse upon that portion which fell to his share, and which he had the tilling of; and this curse made it barren. Abel's blood spoiled the fruitfulness of Cain's field. Ps. cvii. 34.

A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth; without any certain dwelling place, banished from thy father and thy father's family; compassed about with all the troubles and inconveniences that attend an unsettled, unquiet state. The grounds of this were the horrors of a guilty conscience, which did continually fly in his face, and make him a terror round about.

This was the sentence, and it was not only a just and righteous, but a merciful sentence. Cain's body

was made to wander, when he had deserved that God should *make his soul to wander*. I refer to the original expression used by Job. xxvii. 8. Was it not mercy that he was sent to wander on earth, that deserved to have been cast into everlasting burnings? The great mercy of this reprieve was, that hereby he had space given him to repent, if he had had the grace to have been led to repentance by this goodness of God. Rom. ii. 4.

13 And Cain said unto the LORD,
My punishment is greater than I can
bear.

Instead of justifying God, and judging himself, accepting the punishment of his iniquity, and acknowledging the righteousness, nay, the goodness, of God in this sentence; instead of saying, as he had cause to say, blessed be God, I am out of hell; he falls a quarrelling with God and his justice, as if God had herein done him wrong. Here's no concern how to get the guilt removed, how to retrieve the favour of God, and to recover the light of his countenance. No; that was the farthest thing from his thoughts; but the punishment stuck a little upon his stomach. To be a fugitive and a vagabond was a thing that his high spirit could not brook, and therefore that

he complains of. Wicked people are more concerned about their afflictions,—to get them removed,—than about their sins, to get them pardoned; as Pharaoh, —*intreat the Lord, that he may take away from me this death*; Exod. x. 17; not this sin, of which this death is the wages. Indeed, the margin reads it, (and the original will well bear it,) *mine iniquity is greater than that it may be forgiven*; the same word (as was stated before) signifying sin and punishment; and the same word also signifying *to bear*, and *to lift off*,—that is, to forgive: for when God forgives sin, he lifts it off, as a burden too heavy for the sinner to bear,—a burden under which he must have eternally sunk, had not Christ borne it in his own body upon the tree. And, reading it so, it seems that Cain saw his condition bad; nay, (which is worse) thought it desperate. He speaks of iniquity but in a despairing way, as if his iniquity, which was at most but finite, had extended beyond the infinite, boundless mercy of almighty God. Thus Judas said, *I have sinned*. That was well said; but *he departed, and went, and hanged himself*; Matt. xxvii. 4, 5; saying in effect with Cain here, my iniquity is greater than can be forgiven, and therefore Satan take thine own. Desponding, despairing sinners, that cry out of the impardonableness of their sin, may see by this whose language they speak who say, *there is*

no hope : no; for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go. Jer. ii. 25. There is hope for the worst of sinners, upon their repentance. Cain himself was mistaken when he said mine iniquity is greater than can be forgiven.

14 Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth ; and from thy face shall I be hid ; and I shall be a fugitive and vagabond in the earth ; and it shall come to pass, *that* every one that findeth me shall slay me.

This verse seems to intimate that it was the greatness of the punishment that troubled Cain, more than the greatness of the sin.

Behold; let every body take notice how severely I am handled. *Behold, thou hast driven me out*; is not this hard? *I shall be a fugitive and vagabond*; is not this unjust? Can it be a righteous thing that for one single sin, I should thus incur a complicated sentence? Behold and see, was ever sorrow like unto my sorrow? was ever wrong like unto my wrong? Such was the language of Cain's unhumbléd heart. And for the greater aggravation of the case, he reckons up the particulars of his sentence, which may seem more severe than his father's when he

had sinned. To Adam God was pleased to give a signal token of his love in the promise he made him. But not a word of this to Cain; no mercy in store for him; no door of hope opened to him. To Adam the cup was mixed, but Cain must wring out the dregs and drink them. And forasmuch as no evidence appears for him in the word of God, the verdict is generally (by divines) brought against him as to his eternal state.

One part of Cain's complaint is, *from thy face shall I be hid*. Did he think he could go from God's common presence? No: I suppose he was better taught. Or was he troubled that he should want the light of God's countenance shining upon his soul? No: he knew not what that meant, having never experimentally tasted the sweetness of it. But that which troubled him was, that being hid from God's face, he should want that protection and supply, that plenty and prosperity, which he had been taught to count the fruit and effect of God's love and favour. Or, *from thy face shall I be hid*; that is, from the ordinances of worship. I shall be excommunicated; I must come no more to the altar, bring no more sacrifices, be cut off from my father's family, and continue no longer a member of the visible church. And this will certainly turn to my everlasting reproach. Nay, worse yet;

every one that finds me shall slay me. Now I lie under the curse of God, I shall be sure to lie under the hatred of all the world, which will certainly cost me my life one time or other; and is not that hard? Observe,

1. He takes it for granted that blood calls for blood; which it seems was a principle which the world, in its very infancy, was no stranger to. *He that doth violence to the blood of any person, let him flee to the pit; let no man stay him,* was a rule written in the hearts of men by nature, long before Solomon wrote it in the book of Proverbs. Chap. xxviii. 17. Cain, seeing himself thrown out of God's protection, saw the whole creation armed against him to destroy him. He was like a vineyard when the hedge is gone; exposed to dangers and enemies on all sides. He that is hid from the face of God, lies at the mercy of a thousand deaths every moment. *Every one.* Some read it as a wish: Now therefore let it be that any that finds me may kill me. So Dr. Lightfoot: Begging for death, that he might be shut out of that sad condition to which God had doomed him.

2. Though there were none at this time in the world but Cain's own relations, none of whom, one would think, would attempt to kill him; yet even of them he is afraid. By this we may see the nature

of a guilty conscience. It makes afraid even where no fear is; like a man in debt, who thinks every one he meets, a bailiff. That which Solomon gives as the language of a sleepy sluggard, is sometimes the language of an awakened conscience: *there is a lion in the way, a lion is in the streets.* Prov. xxvi. 13. So Cain here: Every one (though it were my own father) that finds me, will slay me. *The wicked flee when no man pursueth.* Prov. xxviii. 1. Lev. xxvi. 17, 36. Job. xv. 20, 21. Therefore *stand in awe, and sin not.* Ps. iv. 4.

15 And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.

The sentence was that Cain should be a fugitive and a vagabond; and lest any one should kill him, and so put a stop to that, God takes care that nobody shall kill him, upon pain of no less than sevenfold vengeance.

God, to show that he himself is sovereign Lord of life, will not have Cain slain without special order from himself. After the flood, (whether before or not doth not appear,) he committed this power to

man. *Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man* (that is, by the public magistrate, not by every private person) *shall his blood be shed.* Gen. ix. 6. Cain was afraid of being killed; but saith God, though thou art out of the care of my mercy, thou shalt continue under the protection of my justice. God would have the first murderer to remain to succeeding ages, as a standing monument of divine vengeance, that when people saw him a fugitive and a vagabond, they might say, this comes of sin; and so not only *hear and fear*, but see and fear, *and do no more presumptuously.* Deut. xvii. 13. God having made Cain the monument of his wrath against all murderers, he that would kill him, would sin in the face of an express warning, which is certainly a very great aggravation of any sin, as that of Belshazzar: *Though thou knewest all this.* Dan. v. 22.

God *set a mark upon Cain.* What this mark was, is uncertain. The Jews have many wild conceits about it. What it was is not material, since we know it was some visible mark of infamy and disgrace, so that let him go where he would, people might point at him and say, yonder goes the man that murdered his brother. But nobody durst kill him, for fear of the threatened vengeance. *Slay them not*, saith the Psalmist, *lest my people forget.*

Ps. lix. 11. So God would not have Cain slain, lest the world that then was should forget. If he had been put to death, the warning might have lasted a while, but would soon have worn off. Therefore God did preserve him for a terror to all, as long as he lived, which, we know in those ages was a great while.

16 And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.

He was banished from his father's house and family; cast out of the communion of the faithful, and parted for ever from the society of the saints. Ps. v. 5, 6. Cain did now go out from the presence of the Lord, and I believe never came into it again to his comfort. He went *into the land of Nod,—of shaking*, so the word signifies; the place, 'tis likely, taking its name from the unsettled, unquiet condition of Cain there. Through a sense of past guilt, and a fear of future wrath, he had no rest in his spirit; but was continually hurried to and fro by the terrors of a guilty conscience. See what they get that go away from God; no rest, you may be sure. Turn the magnetic needle from the pole, and you'll see it ever quivering, but never resting till it return

thither. Those that go from the presence of the Lord, are sure to go to a restless place, both in this world and the next. Therefore, return unto the Lord, and, in so doing, thou wilt *return unto thy rest, O my soul.* Ps. cxvi. 7.

17 And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch.

Cain, that wicked Cain that slew his brother, and was cursed for it by God himself, did yet enjoy the blessing of a numerous offspring; a blessing which, like other temporal blessings, we often see the worst of men partakers of. Cursed Cain peoples nations, whilst blessed Abel (as many think) dies childless. The curse of Cain being chiefly a curse upon his soul, (which is the worst of curses,) was not to operate this way, and therefore no wonder if he and his prosper in the world, at least till the seventh generation, which did perhaps extend to the universal flood, and then vengeance came; for though it be slow, yet it is sure. *Though sentence against an evil work be not executed speedily,* (Eccles. viii. 11,) yet it shall certainly be executed, first or last, sooner or later. Ps. xxxvii. 9, 38. lxxiii. 17, 18.

The name of Cain's eldest son was *Enoch*; not that holy, good Enoch that walked with God, and was not, for God took him; but another of that name: for names do not necessarily make natures. There was Judas a saint, as well as Judas a traitor, amongst Christ's disciples. John. xiv. 22.

Cain *builded a city*; 1. For defence. Concluding that every one that found him would slay him; and perhaps not trusting to the mark that God had put upon him for security, he falls a building, that he might lodge himself in safety within the walls of a city, which doubtless were made strong enough for that purpose. 2. For diversion; that when he was filled with terror about his sin, the business and employment of that undertaking might turn his thoughts another way; that, having that to think of, he might not think of his sin; that the noises of axes and hammers might drown the cries, and quiet the clamours of a guilty conscience. 'Tis a common thing for men in Cain's condition, to think to baffle their convictions by the hurry of business. A head full of cares is a common remedy for a heart full of terrors. But in hell there will be no city to build, and then the worm that dies not will gnaw undisturbed. Cain and his wicked race, though under the curse, dwell in a city, compact together; whilst Adam and his godly family dwell in tents. 'Tis no

new thing for sinners to get the start of saints in outward prosperity. The dynasty of Eden's kings bears date long before that of Israel's. Gen. xxxvi. 31.

18 And unto Enoch was born Irad : and Irad begat Mehujael : and Mehujael begat Methusael : and Methusael begat Lamech.

'Tis observable how Cain's generation is numbered in haste ; three or four in one verse ; written as it were in short-hand, as if God had no care at all about them, and delights not to record their names in the book of the Scriptures, whose names were not written in the book of the Lamb. Rev. xxi. 27. No notice is taken how long they lived, that lived in sin ; and the recording of their names seems to be only to bring in the following passage about Lamech. The wicked of the world are but lumber, compared with the saints, which are God's jewels. Mal. iii. 17.

19 And Lamech took unto him two wives ; the name of the one *was* Adah, and the name of the other Zillah.

This Lamech, one of the wicked branches that sprung from Cain the cursed root, was the first we

read of that transgressed the institution of marriage by taking two wives. For though, after Lamech had broken the ice, many of God's own people fell into this snare, yet from the beginning it was not so. Mal. ii. 15. Matt. xix. 4. The latter wife of Lamech is called *Zillah*, which signifies *her shadow*. The former was his true wife, the latter was but the shadow of one.

20 And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and *of such as have cattle*.

Though Lamech sinned in having two wives, yet God, who sometimes suffers wicked men to prosper even in a sinful way, blessed him with children by both; and such children as lived to be famous in their generation, men of renown; not for piety, but for ingenuity, which are too often parted. *Jabal was the father of such as dwell in tents*; that is, in shepherd's tents; he was the inventor, or rather, the improver, of the art of tending and managing cattle. Abel is said to be a keeper of sheep, but perhaps the business died with him; or Cain, out of hatred to his memory, would let none of his practice it, till Jabal, having an eye to the profit of it, revived it, and became a famous shepherd, and thence was called by the shepherds of those times, their father.

21 And his brother's name *was* Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ.

Jubal gave his mind to music, and was perhaps the inventor of musical instruments, and became famous for that. When Jabal had set people in a way to be rich, Jubal put them in a way to be merry. Those that *spend their days in wealth*, will not be without *the timbrel and harp*. Job xxi. 12, 13.

22 And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron: and the sister of Tubal-cain *was* Naamah.

Tubal-cain was the *instructor*, or, as the margin reads it, the *whetter*, (for instruction that will be to any purpose, must be like whetting the same truths over and over again, on this side, on that side, Deut. vi. 7,) *of every artificer*; that is, he put men on to, and gave them directions in, working *in brass and iron*. Not but that the art ~~was~~ known before, else where had they instruments for husbandry? but he improved it.

Thus we see, 1. What were the things that this

wicked race of cursed Cain set their hearts upon, and employed their heads and hands about; viz. the things of the world; how to be rich, and how to be mighty, and how to be merry. There was nothing of God, of his fear, or of his service, among them. Present things filled them. Here's a father of shepherds, and a father of musicians, but no father of the faithful. Here's one to teach the working of brass and iron, but none to teach the good knowledge of the Lord. Job xxi. 10, 12, 14, 15.

2. That though they were a cursed generation, yet they did enjoy outward blessings; aye, and inward accomplishments too; ingenuity and skill. God, though indeed he was not *their* God, taught them discretion. Isa. xxviii. 26. The subtilty of the serpent and the simplicity of the dove do not always go together. Matt. x. 16.

23 And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech; for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt:

24 If Cain shall be avenged seven-fold, truly Lamech seventy and seven-fold.

Partly because of the various readings which the original will bear, and partly because we are so much in the dark concerning Lamech, what he was, and what he did, the speech itself coming in so abruptly, carries in it much difficulty; and it is not easy to pitch upon any sense of it which we can confidently call a true one.

1. Some look upon it as a good speech, meaning either, (1.) *If I should slay a man*, one or other, or *a young man*, it would be *to my wounding*,—it would be *to my hurt*; God would take vengeance on me more severely than he did on Cain: I must not expect to be spared as he was, having such a warning before me as he had not. Or, (2.) *I have slain a man*, *to the wounding* of my conscience,—*a young man*, *to the hurt* of my soul; and if God was so severe with Cain as to take vengeance on him sevenfold, he will be more severe with me, and take vengeance on me seventy-sevenfold, for sinning against such fair warning.

2. It should seem rather that Lamech's wives, observing the fierceness of his spirit, and how cruel and oppressive he was, did withdraw from him, for fear perhaps lest he should be destroyed, and they should perish with him; and that, to take off this fear of theirs, he calls to them, "Suppose I have slain a man, or a young man, it is to my own wounding,—

to my own hurt, and not to yours : why need you be concerned?" The margin reads it, *I would slay a man in my wound*; that is, be not afraid for me; though I have wronged and oppressed many, yet if any one thinks to be revenged on me, and goes about to wound or hurt me, I will defend myself and you too. And, taking it either way, the last clause, (*if Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, surely Lamech seventy and sevenfold,*) comes all to one. Never fear that any body will kill me; for though I have slain a man, yet I have not slain my brother, as Cain did. And if God would take vengeance upon him that should kill Cain, much more will God take vengeance upon him that kills me, who have not been so bad as Cain.

Now this is all we have recorded in the book of God concerning Cain's posterity, till we have them all cut off in the universal deluge.

25 And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, *said she*, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew.

Seth's name was given him by his mother prophetically. It signifies one put, placed, or established; noting the continuance of Seth himself, that he should not apostatize from the church as Cain did;

and also the continuance of his posterity to the end of time. From Seth the church was to come; nay, from him the Messiah was to come.

Instead of Abel. Sometimes when God takes away one mercy, one comfort from his people, he gives them another instead of it. A Seth is given instead of an Abel taken.

26 And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the Lord.

Enos signifies miserable, or wretched. 'Tis a word in the Hebrew language which signifies *man* in general. Man by nature, in innocency, was but *Adam, red earth*,—which at the worst speaks but his meanness; but by the fall he became *Enosh, sickly*,—which bespeaks his misery. *Enos* perhaps had his name from the more than ordinary wickedness and wretchedness of that generation.

Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord. The Chaldee paraphrase reads it, *then began men to profane the name of the Lord.* Worship that had been hitherto kept up, now began to be neglected.

Or, *to call upon the name of the Lord* may mean to worship God in public assemblies. Hitherto they

had kept to their closets and families, but now they began to meet together. Some make the *then* here to refer, not to the birth of Enos, but to the whole foregoing story. *Then*, when men saw both in Cain and Lamech the sad fruits and effects of sin, *then* they began to consider what would be the issue of sin; then they began to be religious indeed. It is a good thing when God's judgments to others are warnings to us to take heed of the ways of sin, and to mend our pace in the ways of holiness. As one said, when his friend was suddenly snatched away by death, Should not such a sight as this make me religious?

Then began men, that is, godly men, *to call themselves by the name of the Lord*. So the margin reads it. When Cain and his progeny had built a city, and began to declare themselves for wickedness, the people of God declared themselves for God, calling themselves *the sons of God*. chap. vi. 2. Then began the distinction between professors and profane, the servants of God and the servants of sin; a distinction that hath been kept up in the world ever since, and will be while the world stands. Nay, the division of them into wicked and godly, is a division that will last through eternity, when other divisions and subdivisions shall be known no more.

CHAPTER. V.

The first words of this chapter give us the title or argument of the whole ;—this is the book of the generations of Adam ; that is, the catalogue of the posterity of Adam during the first age of the world ; namely, to the flood. Not of all Adam's posterity, but only of the holy seed, which were the substance thereof, Isa. vi. 13 ; and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came. Rom. ix. 5. The contents of this chapter we have in 1 Chron. i. 1, 2, 3, 4. But that which is there set down in short, is here at large recorded, and left to the church as the only authentic history of those primo-primitive times.

THIS is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him ;

2 Male and female created he them ; and blessed them, and called their name

Adam, in the day when they were created.

How largely and expressly are the generations of these antediluvian patriarchs recorded! Thus much matter, one would think, might have been delivered in fewer words. But 'tis a principle we are to abide by, that there is not an idle word in God's book, whatever there are in men's. These generations are thus largely set down, partly to make the computation of years the more plain and clear, and partly to show how God delights to speak of his saints and servants. It was observed before how Cain's generation is numbered in haste, as if the Holy Ghost took no delight in the mentioning of his race. But Seth's posterity, the godly race, is written here in a larger scroll, and in more legible characters; as if the blessed Spirit, who delighted to dwell in their hearts, did also delight to dwell upon their history. We are told how long they lived that lived in God's fear; and when they died that died in his favour; but as for others it is no matter. *The memory of the just is blessed, but the name of the wicked shall rot.* Prov. x. 7.

The life of every one of these patriarchs is expressed by days, to note the shortness of the life of man, even then when it is at the longest. If their

lives, who fulfilled their hundreds, must be reckoned by days; surely ours, that can scarce attain to scores, should be computed by hours. Jacob had learned the art of reckoning his life by days. Gen. xlvii. 9. What reason have we to pray with Moses, *teach us to number our days.* Ps. xc. 12.

Concerning each of these patriarchs (except Enoch) it is said, *he died*; which is repeated over and over again; to show that when sin did by one man enter into the world, death came in with it; *and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.* Rom. v. 12.

All of them lived exceeding long. Not one died till he had seen the revolutions of almost eight hundred years, and some of them lived much longer. That was a great while for the precious jewel of the soul to remain inclosed in the cabinet of the body. To those that see eighty, ninety, or a hundred years, (some few instances of such there are,) what a long time doth it seem in the reflection; and how much longer do those periods seem to those that are young, and have their time before them. 'Tis doubted by some whether these years were of the length that ours are, or not. Some have fancied that they were lunary years, such as the Egyptians did sometimes reckon by, counting every month a year. But if so, they had children when very young, when only six,

seven, or eight years old, which is not at all credible.

Reasons are given why the antediluvian patriarchs did live so long:— as,

1. God might order it so for the greater increase and multiplication of mankind; and that the earth might be the sooner filled, and the world (especially the church of God in it) peopled.

2. They might themselves by their great temperance, sobriety, and other virtues, be instrumental in prolonging their own lives; especially as they were no doubt strangers to the luxury and intemperance of later ages, which do so much shorten life and hasten death.

3. Probably the earth was more fertile, the fruits of it more nourishing, the air more healthful, and perhaps the influences of the heavenly bodies more benign, before the flood than after.

4. The wise God prolonged their lives for the sake of piety and religion. There being then no written word, all things were delivered by tradition; the revealed will of God was handed down from father to son by word of mouth. Now it was expedient that men should live so long, to prevent the mistakes and errors which commonly attend such traditions; in order to the keeping of the stream of tradition clear and untainted. All the patriarchs mentioned in this chapter, except Noah, were born before Adam died,

and so did or might converse with him, and receive from him a certain account of the creation, paradise, the fall, the promise, the divine commands, and such other things as were needful for them to be acquainted with. So that if any error or mistake did arise, they might presently have recourse to Adam while he lived, as to an oracle, for the rectifying of it; and after his death to Methuselah, or some others of them who had conversed with Adam. So great was the care of Almighty God for his church; so great was his care to preserve in it the knowledge of his will, and the purity of his worship.

From the shortness of the age of man at present, compared with what it was before the flood, we cannot, as some do, conclude a universal and perpetual decay in nature, which is an opinion more common than sound; for (1.) We see that the great length of human life in the first ages of the world, was ordered by God for special reasons which did not afterwards hold good, and was, as is commonly expressed, *opus providentiæ, non naturæ*; the work, not of nature, but of providence. (2.) If there had been such a constant decay, Adam, the first man, would have lived the longest; whereas the contrary appears; for not only Jared and Methusaleh, before the flood,—but Noah, after the flood, outstripped him by many years. (3.) It is manifest that since

the time of Moses, which is now above three thousand years, there has been no such decay in the life of man; for then it was fixed at seventy years, and at the most eighty; Ps. xc. 10; an age which we see many now-a-days not only arrive at, but go much beyond.

The accounts in this chapter are the only rule we have to go by in our computation of the years before the flood. They make them to amount, in all, to one thousand six hundred and fifty-six years; and so long it was from the creation to the flood. The Septuagint translation differs from the Hebrew original in the account of these years; but the best chronologers stick to the Hebrew text, and, I think, upon very good grounds.

Concerning Adam, the father of all that followed, observe, that he was not begotten and born as the rest of them were; no, he was *the son of God*. Luke iii. 38. He had this privilege peculiar to himself, that he was the immediate workmanship of God. The first two verses of this chapter are the substance of what is said before, more at large, concerning man in his original: (1.) He was *created*; made out of nothing, or something next to nothing, even the dust of the ground. (2.) *God created* him. It was no less than a divine power that gave to man his being; and doth he not then owe that being to the

power that gave it him? (3.) Man was created by God, not from eternity, but in time; *in the day*; that famous, that remarkable day, a day never to be forgotten. (4.) He was created *in the likeness of God*, both as to the powers and faculties of his soul, (which part of the likeness remains still,) and also as to that perfect purity and complete rectitude of his nature,—that wisdom, righteousness, and true holiness, with which he was richly endowed in the day of his creation, and which by sin he wholly lost; to which by grace the saints are in part restored in this world; and in which, in glory, they shall be finally completed in the other world. (5.) They were made *male and female*, for the mutual comfort one of another, and for the increase of mankind. Both Adam and Eve were made immediately by God, both were made in the image of God; and therefore, between the sexes there is not that great distance and inequality that many dream of. (6.) God *blessed them*. It is usual with parents to bless their children. So God, the common Father, was pleased to bless his. And this blessing is a second time mentioned, lest it should be thought it was wholly lost and gone by the sin of Adam. (7.) *He called their name Adam*. It seems the woman was Adam as well as the man; which notes the strict and close union that was betwixt them, and ought to be betwixt

all husbands and wives. Being made one flesh by marriage, 'twas reasonable they should have but one name. We find in the Hebrew not only mankind in general, but women in particular, styled Adam, as in Num. xxxi. 35, 40, 46, 47. Adam had named the rest of the creatures, but God would not let him name himself, but gave him a name which would help to keep him humble, by reminding him of the meanness of his original; for what is *Adam* but red earth?

3 And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat *a son* in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth:

4 And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters:

5 And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died.

6 And Seth lived an hundred and five years, and begat Enos:

7 And Seth lived after he begat Enos eight hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters:

8 And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years : and he died.

Adam lived 930 years, and then died, as God himself had told him. *Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.* chap. iii. 19. And unto dust he did accordingly return. In the day that he ate of the forbidden fruit, in that very day, he died spiritually, and became liable to temporal death. The sentence was passed immediately, though it was 930 years (a long reprieve) before execution was done. So merciful a judge had he to deal with.

We read of Seth in chap. iv. 25, that he was so called because he was given *instead of Abel, whom Cain slew*. Now here's one thing further said concerning him, namely, that Adam begat him *in his own likeness, after his own image*; that is, (1.) A man like himself; having a body adorned with such parts and members, and a soul endowed with such powers and faculties, as Adam himself had. (2.) A sinful man like himself; corrupted, defiled, depraved; and, the consequent of this, a weak, frail, mortal, dying creature. *His own likeness* seems here to be put in opposition to God's likeness, in which Adam was created.

Those that are renewed by the Spirit of grace, that have *put off the old man, and put on the new*

man, (Col. iii. 9, 10,) and so become children of God, and heirs of glory, were yet born in the likeness of fallen Adam, *after the similitude of Adam's transgression*, (Rom v. 14,) of Adam's corruption. 'Tis so with the best of men. Those that by grace are related to heaven itself, yet may do well to remember that their first *father was an Amorite*, and their *mother a Hittite*; (Ezek. xvi. 3;) and sometimes to cast an eye upon *the rock whence they were hewn*, and upon *the hole of the pit whence they were digged*, (Isa. li. 1,) that they may not be high-minded, but fear. Rom. ii. 20.

9 And Enos lived ninety years, and begat Cainan:

10 And Enos lived after he begat Cainan eight hundred and fifteen years, and begat sons and daughters:

11 And all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years: and he died.

12 And Cainan lived seventy years, and begat Mahalaleel:

13 And Cainan lived after he begat Mahalaleel eight hundred and forty years, and begat sons and daughters:

14 And all the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years: and he died.

15 And Mahalaleel lived sixty and five years, and begat Jared:

16 And Mahalaleel lived after he begat Jared eight hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters:

17 And all the days of Mahalaleel were eight hundred ninety and five years: and he died.

18 And Jared lived an hundred sixty and two years, and he begat Enoch:

19 And Jared lived after he begat Enoch eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:

20 And all the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty and two years: and he died.

21 And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah:

22 And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:

23 And all the days of Enoch were

three hundred sixty and five years:

24 And Enoch walked with God:
and he *was* not; for God took him.

The account runs on for several verses without any thing remarkable. But at length comes in an exception to the rule. There is one stop made, and that is at the seventh from Adam, Enoch, of whom special notice is taken as one that went beyond the rest, not in greatness, but in goodness; not in height, but in holiness. He was a star of the first magnitude, and is accordingly mentioned with peculiar honour. Observe,

1. His living in the world. *Enoch walked with God*; that is, saysome, he took upon him the priesthood; he was a minister of religion. Executing the priest's office is twice in one chapter termed *walking before God*. 1 Sam. ii. 30, 35. When religion began to go out of fashion in the world, Enoch did not only take up the profession of it himself, but did all he could to bring others into the love and practice of it too. Or rather, by walking with God, is meant that Enoch lived a godly, righteous, and sober life. He was agreed with God; for *can two walk together except they be agreed?* Amos iii. 3. He walked in the fear of God, and in the love of God; his care and endeavour was in every thing to please God,

(Heb. xi. 5,) and in nothing to offend him. He kept up communion with God; he conversed with him in his holy ordinances; he walked circumspectly, accurately, exactly, in the whole course of his conversation; he kept his integrity in a time of general apostacy. In a word, he was in all points a real saint. Remark that it is said, (ver. 21,) *Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methusaleh*, and (ver. 22) *Enoch walked with God, after he begat Methusaleh, three hundred years*; by which it should seem that he did not walk with God till after he was sixty-five years old. During his first sixty-five years he lived, walked, as others did,—no better than the common sort of people; but afterwards 'twas otherwise. First his heart was changed, and then his way; his walk was changed. The life that I *now* live, saith Paul, Gal. ii. 20, I live by the faith of the Son of God;—implying that he could remember a time when he lived otherwise: and so could Enoch too, no doubt; and that might help to keep him humble under his high attainments.

See how the Holy Ghost alters the phrase when he comes to speak of Enoch. Of Jared it is said, Jared *lived* after he begat Enoch, so many years: and so of the rest; but of Enoch it is said, *Enoch walked with God*, after he begat Methusaleh, so many years; to intimate to us that walking with God was his

very life,—that the business, the scope, the end, of his life was, to please God. As Paul says, (Phil. i. 21,) *to me to live is Christ*,—take away Christ, and you take away my life; so let Enoch cease to walk with God, and he ceases to live. The life of a true Christian is a walking with God. We are sometimes said to walk *before* God; (Ps. lvi. 13;) sometimes *after* God; (Hos. xi. 10;) sometimes *with* God; Gen. vi. 9. It comes all to one. This walking notes an active, progressive, regular, and even course of holy living.

Enoch walked with God: how long? Three hundred years. If it had been so many days, it had been a great while to keep close to God and duty; but to continue so many years walking with God, did certainly argue very high attainments in grace. Not as if Enoch were absolutely without sin: no; that is a privilege reserved for the state of glory; but his sincerity was his perfection; and in that perfection he continued till he became indeed *perfect and entire, wanting nothing*. Jam. i. 4. Enoch, while he lived, did, by his example, demonstrate to the world the reality and weight of invisible things.

We have a most excellent prophecy of his recorded in the epistle of Jude, concerning the coming of Christ to judgment. Whether that which is there recorded were all his prophecy, and whether the

apostle had it by immediate revelation, or whether by tradition, doth not appear; but that there was such a prophecy is certain. Enoch was a friend of God. Now a friend in the Hebrew language is *the man of one's counsel*. God told Enoch five thousand years ago that which is not yet come to pass, namely the day of judgment. *Shall I hide from Abraham, (shall I hide from Enoch,) that thing which I do?* Gen. xviii. 17. *Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.* Amos iii. 7.

2. His leaving the world. As he did not live like the rest, so he did not die like the rest. *He was not, for God took him*; that is, translated him, so that he should not see death. Heb. xi. 5. Whence did God take him? Out of a sinful, miserable world. Whither did he take him? To a holy, happy world. He took him, body and soul, to glory. When he had walked long enough with God on earth, he was called to rest with him in heaven; and probably a chariot of fire and horses of fire were sent to fetch him, such as were sent to fetch Elijah. This was a signal honour put upon Enoch, and a reward of his close walking with God. All those, and only those, that walk with God in grace here, shall be taken to live with God in glory hereafter.

God took Enoch when he had lived but three

hundred and sixty-five years; (a year of years;) which was, as men's ages went then, in the midst of his days; for there were none of these patriarchs that did not more than double that. And why so soon, I wonder? Was it lest he should cool and decay in grace,—lest he should flag in his walking with God? Or was it because God saw the world was not worthy of him, and that it was time,—as they did not know the worth of such a jewel,—to take him from them? Or was he so much above and so weary of the world, as to desire to get out of it, and had his desire granted? Or was not his course finished the sooner, because he went so fast? And did not God know that the time he gained on earth he lost in heaven?

The translation of Enoch to heaven was perhaps for the comfort and encouragement of the patriarchs, and for the confirmation of their faith concerning the glory promised; for they were all at this time alive together, and were or might be witnesses of it, except Adam, who died fifty-seven years before, and Noah, who was not born till sixty-nine years after. And Adam had encouragement enough from God's own mouth in paradise; and Noah was to receive encouragement enough from God, before, in, and after, the flood.

25 And Methuselah lived an hundred

eighty and seven years, and begat Lamech:

26 And Methuselah lived after he begat Lamech seven hundred eighty and two years, and begat sons and daughters:

27 And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years: and he died.

Concerning Methuselah three things are observable:

1. His name. *Methuselah* signifies *he dies*, or, *there is a dart*, or, *there is a sending forth*, that is, of the flood of waters which came the same year that Methuselah died. So Enoch prophesied, in the name that he gave his son; which would remain a standing warning to the careless world, of the approaching deluge; a warning given of the judgment coming, almost a thousand years before it came. That was fair warning indeed. Who will not say that God is *slow to anger*? Joel ii. 13.

2. His age. Methuselah lived nine hundred and sixty nine years; not quite a thousand, though very near it. A thousand years carries some shadow of perfection; (Ps. xc. 4;) and therefore no man ever attained to that age. Methuselah came nearest to it.

3. His death:—*and he died*. Though the stroke

of death comes slowly to some, it comes surely to all. The longest liver at length must die, *for that is the end of all men.* Eccles. vii. 2. The pitcher doth not go so oft to the well, but it comes home broken at last. Eccles. xii. 6. Methuselah died a little before the flood, and so was, as good men use to be, *taken away from the evil to come.* Isa. lvii. 1. The Jewish writers say that he died just seven days before the flood, (chap. vii. 10,) so that people might have taken warning by his death; but then, as afterwards, none laid it to heart.

28 And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat a son :

29 And he called his name Noah, saying, *This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed.*

30 And Lamech lived after he begat Noah five hundred ninety and five years, and begat sons and daughters :

31 And all the days of Lamech were seven hundred seventy and seven years : and he died.

32 And Noah was five hundred years old: and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Concerning Noah, of whom much is said in the following chapters, but little is said in this chapter. We have,

1. His name—Noah, which signifies *rest*, with the reason of it;—*this same shall comfort us*. He was a son that his parents promised themselves rest and comfort in. Some think they imagined him to be the promised seed,—the Messiah. What occasion they might have to think so, doth not appear; but the hearts of good people then were, perhaps, so much set upon the fulfilment of the promise of a Messiah, that they were ready to catch at the least occasion. *Because of the ground*. The curse of the ground was a judgment: comfort in Noah, a mercy. When we have one mercy to put in the scale against another affliction, we may with the more patience bear that affliction, whatever it is.

2. His children. Three only are mentioned,—Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Whether he had more or not, doth not appear. It should seem that Japheth was the eldest; (see chap. x. 21;) but Shem is named first,—to him perhaps the birthright being given,—because from him the Messiah—the head,

and the church—the body, (Colos. i. 18,) were to come. So that in putting Shem first, Christ was in effect put first, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence.

CHAPTER VI.

The blessed Spirit having, in the foregoing chapter, given us a brief history of the old world, and intending a more large account of the final ruin and destruction of it, doth in this chapter set forth the preparatives to that ruin, the performance whereof we have in the next chapter. Three things in general offer themselves to our consideration in this chapter. I. The abounding iniquity of the wicked world; II. The righteous God's resentment of that abounding iniquity; III. The special favour of God showed to his servant Noah. And all these things concerning the old world were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the new world are come. 1 Cor. x. 11.

AND it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,

2 That the sons of God saw the

daughters of men that they *were* fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

The abounding iniquity and prevailing wickedness of the old world was the procuring, provoking cause of the destruction of it. God would never have destroyed the world, if he had not found wickedness in it. The flood would not have been sent to wash the world, if God had not seen it very filthy. Sin brings ruin. That which goes up in a vapour of sin, will certainly come down in a shower of wrath, sooner or later. How many famous persons, great families, magnificent cities, flourishing churches, mighty nations, hath sin, in all ages, been the ruin of! And *the Lord is known by these judgments which he executeth.* Ps. ix. 16.

Now concerning this abounding iniquity, observe,

1. In general, it was *when men began to multiply.* "Increase and multiply" was the blessing pronounced by God upon our first parents in the day of their creation, which included a promise that they should so increase and multiply; and now they did multiply, iniquity multiplied with them. Sin oftentimes takes occasion by the mercies of God to be more *exceeding sinful*, as the phrase is, Rom. vii. 13. How many *continue in sin*, not only *that grace may*

abound, (Rom. vi. 1,) but because grace (the gracious dealing of God towards them) hath abounded. The better God is to man, the worse many times man is to God. While men were few, and the world thinly peopled, they did well enough. Though there was a generation of Cain, wicked and vile; yet there was a generation of Seth, who did not only begin, but no doubt continued, to call upon the name of the Lord. When they began to increase, things went wrong. Just so it was in the beginning of the gospel world. They were *of one heart, and of one soul*, Acts iv. 32; *but when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring*; Acts vi. 1; and we read, (Is. ix. 3,) *thou hast multiplied the nation, and hast not increased the joy*. He that follows the multitude, usually follows them to do evil. Ex. xxiii. 2. The more sinners, the more sin. A multitude of offenders usually gives encouragement to hope for impunity; and sin is such a spreading leprosy, that one sinner infects a great many.

2. The particular sins that abounded were, lasciviousness and wantonness. *The sons of God saw*. By the sons of God are not meant, as some fancy, the angels; for the evil angels are never called the sons of God, and the holy angels neither marry nor are given in marriage; Matt. xxii. 30; not the sons of God, that is, noblemen, married the daughters

of men, that is, women of mean extraction, as others expound it; for what sin was there in that?—but the sons of God, that is, the posterity of Seth, professors of religion, who were so called as having a covenant interest in God, as their God, by being members of the visible church. Many are the sons of God by profession, that are not so by grace and adoption. Such are *bastards and not sons*. Heb. xii. 8. Now these professing sons of God married the daughters of men, that is, the posterity of Cain, that were profane; out of the pale of the visible church; strangers to God and goodness: not daughters of God; they had no knowledge of him, no interest in him, were not given to him. *Took them wives*. And what harm in that? Was that the worst? Is marriage, which was once graced by God's own institution in innocency, become such a crime? Cannot the sons of God marry, but the wine of their marriage feast must be turned into water, and that not to purify, but to drown them? John ii. 6. Surely there was nothing amiss in taking wives; and of whom should they take them, but of the daughters of men? Yes, there was much amiss. (1.) The marriage of professors with the profane was an evil. Sons of God should marry with daughters of God; ay, and daughters of God with sons of God too; and when it is otherwise, what is it but being *unequally yoked toge-*

ther with unbelievers? 2 Cor. vi. 14. This, I should think, cannot be creditable, cannot be comfortable. (2.) The ground of their choice was evil also. *They saw that they were fair*; they looked at beauty and such external endowments as might serve to gratify their fleshly lusts, never thinking of virtue and those other accomplishments which are more fit to be considered in such a case; for all is not gold that glitters. Adam's eyes were shut, and he fast asleep when his wife was in choosing; but so were not theirs, for they chose by the eye. This sin, like the first sin, began in the eye. (3.) The end of their choice was no better than the ground of it; *they took to themselves*, as the word is; they took *them* wives. They did not look at God in it; at his will, at his glory; they did not marry in the Lord, (1 Cor. vii. 39,) but aimed only at the pleasing and gratifying of their own carnal lusts. (4.) There is an intimation of polygamy. They took *them* wives. One apiece would not serve their turn. In this 'tis likely they learned of Lamech, one of Cain's cursed race, who broke the ice in the matter. If professors sin like the profane, let them expect to smart like them. And what was the effect of these kind of marriages? No good you may be sure. I doubt not but the sons of God were led aside by them into the wicked ways of the daughters of men. Deut. vii.

3, 4. When Solomon, the wisest of men, begins to love many strage women, the next news you hear of him is, that his heart is turned away after other gods. 1 Kings xi. 1—4. If professors marry with the profane, I do not wonder if they soon quit their profession, and become profane too. The bad will sooner corrupt the good, than the good reform the bad. The children of these marriages *were mighty men; men of renown*; men notorious for tyranny and oppression, and all manner of impiety. 'Tis ten to one the children take after the worse side, and will more readily tread in the steps of the one parent's wickedness, than in the steps of the other's piety. Comfort in the children doth very much depend upon the choice of the partner in marriage, which should engage much care and circumspection in that choice.

3 And the LORD said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also *is* flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

Three things are to be observed in this speech:

1. God's resolution not always to strive with man by his Spirit. My Spirit has striven a great while; it shall strive yet a little longer; but it shall not strive always. The Holy Spirit is a striving Spirit with the children of men; striving to turn them away from

sin, and to bring them to God; striving by the checks of their own consciences, by the ministry of the word, by the rebukes of Providence; striving by one fair warning after another to reclaim the sinner. Have not we ourselves experienced these strivings?—something within us that hath whispered in an hour of temptation, “Do not this abominable thing which the Lord hates?” ’Twill be our wisdom to hearken to such whispers, and to close with them, *striving against sin*. Heb. xii. 4. If the Spirit of God be resisted in its strivings, and quenched in its motions, though it may strive long, yet it will not strive always. ’Tis a principle with men not to be always persuading those with whom they cannot prevail; neither will the blessed Spirit do so. If Ephraim be joined to idols, is it not a righteous thing with God to say, Strive no more with him, let him alone? Hos. iv. 17. What guest will stay long there where he is not welcome? Is it not wisdom then to improve these strivings while we have them?

2. The reason of that resolution: *For that he also is flesh*; carnal, earthly, sensual, corrupted, depraved, defiled; and therefore ’tis to no purpose to strive with him; ’tis but labour lost. It is as good to go about to change the Ethiopian’s skin or the leopard’s spots, as to reclaim and reform these impenitent sinners. *Flesh*, in scripture, is frequently opposed

to *spirit*. It is the corrupt nature that renders the strivings of the blessed Spirit ineffectual. 'Tis the law in the members that wars against the law of the mind. Rom. vii. 23. The flesh and the spirit are sworn enemies one to another, and between them there is a constant conflict. Gal. v. 17. Now where the flesh, the carnal part, is so far suffered to prevail, as that the man may be denominated *flesh*, there the Spirit will not always, will not long strive. Those therefore that would enjoy the Spirit's strivings, must curb and restrain, and not gratify and encourage, the corrupt motions and carnal desires of the flesh and of the mind. Eph. ii. 3.

3. A reprieve granted notwithstanding: *Yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years*; so long will I bear with him yet, to see if he will return and repent, but no longer. Hitherto in this verse justice had spoken. Justice said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man. Justice said, He also is flesh; a corrupt, wicked, provoking creature; O let me cut him down. Then, in steps mercy; methinks somewhat like the dresser in the parable: Luke xiii. 8: *Lord, let it alone this year also*. So saith mercy here: Lord, let this sinful world alone this six score years also, till all ways and means and methods are tried for reclaiming; and if in that time they repent, and amend, and bring forth fruit, well; but if not

then after that thou shalt cut it down. And for this reprieve, mercy did prevail. *His days shall be a hundred and twenty years.* So much time they shall have to turn them in, so much space given to repent, but no more. Note. The patience of God with provoking sinners is, (1.) Sometimes long. Many times he bears a great while; his patience is stretched out even unto long-suffering; it is day after day, year after year, before ruin comes. This will one day render sinners the more inexcusable; it will greatly aggravate their condemnation. Every sand in the glass of Divine patience now, will be a drop in the vials of Divine justice shortly. Though sometimes God takes vengeance on sinners in the very act of sin; though sentence against an evil work is sometimes executed speedily; yet not always. Eccles. viii. 11. We see the contrary daily. But though the patience of God is oftentimes very long, yet, (2.) It is always limited. A hundred and twenty years, though it was a long time, yet it was a limited time. We often find that the mercy of God is called everlasting mercy; and there are those in heaven that will be to eternity the monuments of it. But we never read that his patience is everlasting patience. No: that is bounded by the limits of this life; and though there are many monuments of it in time, eternity will produce none. The year of the fig-

tree's reprieve had an end. Though God bear long, he will not bear always, with provoking sinners. Reprieves are not pardons.

4 There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare *children* to them, the same *became* mighty men which *were* of old, men of renown.

These giants were probably men great in stature and strength beyond other people, which strength they did abuse to rapine and oppression; and so became giants in sin, as well as giants in stature. They have their name, *nephilim*, from *naphal*, he fell; because they fell from God and duty, and became apostatizing backsliders; or because they fell upon their poor neighbours, (Job i. 15,) or made them fall before them. These giants were *men of renown*. Heb. *men of name*. They had the name for oppression, and they gloried in it as their honour. A bad sign that all the world was wicked, when the greatest sinners were men of renown among them. Those were counted most honourable by men who were esteemed as vile persons in the eyes of God and his people. *Psa. xv. 4.* And what more ordinary

than for men to bless the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth? Psa. x. 3.

5 And God saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually.

All the sins of sinners are known to God the Judge. The most secret wickednesses are naked and open before him. This the wicked world did not know, or at least would not consider, else surely they would not have sinned at the rate they did. And God not only saw the wicked acts,—men might do that,—but he saw the corrupt habit. The original root, spring-head, and fountain, of all this sin, was the wickedness of the heart. It was from that root of bitterness, that all this gall and wormwood sprung. Deut. xxix. 18. Acts viii. 23. Heb. xii. 15. Jer. xvii. 9. The heart, the thoughts of the heart, the imagination of the thoughts of the heart, evil; all evil, only evil, continually evil. Could more sin have been expressed in fewer words? The heart, which should be the best part, was the worst. The heart, which is the leading part, went wrong, and then all the actions were accordingly. All the violence and oppression, all the luxury and wantonness,

that was in the world, began in the heart. The blessed Jesus, who knew the heart well enough, has told us as much, Matt. xv. 19; and we should be sensible of it, and bewail it before the Lord; tracing the streams of actual transgression to the fountain of original corruption.

6 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

Is God a man, that he should lie? or the son of man, that he should repent? Num. xxiii. 19. Surely not; for with him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Jam. i. 17. He is as immutable in his counsels, as he is in his essence. But this is an expression after the manner of men. As elsewhere eyes, and hands, and feet, are attributed to God, so is repentance here. He repented; that is, he did as men use to do when they repent. He did not change his will, but he changed his way. When God had made man upright, 'tis said *he rested and was refreshed*; Exod. xxxi. 17; he took a delight, and, if we may so speak, a complacency in the work of his hands. But when they had sought out many inventions, (Eccles. vii. 29,) it became otherwise; he began, as it were, to disown his creature, to take no delight in him. Here then we find God repent-

ing that he had made man, because man did so ill requite his Maker; but we never find God repenting that he had redeemed man, though man has made, and the Lord knew that he would make, an ill requital of his redeeming love too. *Those gifts and callings of God are without repentance.* Rom. xi. 29. Then *repentance is hid from his eyes.* Hos. xiii. 14.

It grieved him at his heart. This also is to be understood after the manner of men; for the divine nature is not subject to like passions as we are. He acted as one grieved that he had made them, because by sin they had ruined themselves. Doth sin then grieve God, ay, and grieve him at his heart? and should it not grieve us—grieve us at the heart also? What folly is it to make a mock at that which grieves the God of heaven! Prov. xiv. 9. Should it not in future engage us to take heed of sin, that we may not in any thing grieve Him that hath in so many things been kind to us?

7 And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

God's repentings are accompanied by resolutions. So should ours be. *I will destroy man. Abstergam; I will wipe off man*; as the dust and filth is wiped off a place or thing that we would have clean. God made the world a clean world, but it was spotted and defiled by wicked men; (*Spots in your feasts of charity.* Jude 12.) And this was an eyesore to the holy God. Therefore, saith he, I will wipe them off; and so he did; nay, he washed them off with a flood of waters. Or it may be read, *delebo; I will blot out man*; as those lines are blotted out of a book, which displease the author; or as superfluous words are put in the errata with a *dele*; or rather as the name of a citizen that is dead is blotted out of the roll of the freemen of the city. 'Tis such a blotting as Moses desired to undergo rather than that Israel should be cast off: *Blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book.* Exod. xxxii. 32. Sin brings ruin. Though it comes slowly, yet it comes surely, to all impenitent sinners. Though punishment be God's strange work, his strange act; (Isa. xxviii. 21;) though it be, in a sense, against the grain with him; yet it shall come at last. Mercy will at length give way, and justice take its place.

8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

In the midst of his purpose to destroy the world, God sets a special mark of honour upon Noah. When, for aught we know, there was no other that found grace in the eyes of the Lord, then Noah did. God was not so angry with the unrighteous world but he had a kindness for righteous Noah. The way to find grace in the eyes of the Lord, is to be as Noah was, and to do as Noah did. 2 Cor. v. 9.

9 These *are* the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man *and* perfect in his generations, *and* Noah walked with God.

10 And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

We have here both the reason and evidence of that divine favour of which Noah was the only object in the great day of divine displeasure.

1. The reason why Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord was, because he *was a just man, and perfect in his generation*; and he was the only one that was so; there was none like him in the world. Noah was a none-such. He was just to God, and just to man. Justice is, giving to all their due; to God his due of love, and fear, and worship, and obedience; and to men their due: to superiors, subjection; to inferiors, gentleness; to equals, condescen-

sion; to all, love. Where these debts are duly paid, there's a righteous man. And Noah was not only legally just, but evangelically so. He had righteousness imputed to him, righteousness implanted in him, and righteousness was practised by him. Heb. xi. 7, 9. Noah was *perfect*; not with the perfection of degrees; we know no such thing in this life; but with the perfection of parts; as a child may be called a perfect child, while he is but a child. He was upright; for uprightness is gospel perfection. The perfect man is opposed to the perverse and wicked. Job ix. 20, 21. He did, like Zechariah and Elizabeth, walk *in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless*. Luke i. 6. He was in a holy, gracious state; and he walked in holy, gracious ways. Noah was perfect *in his generation*; in that wicked profane generation. He was good in bad times; good when nobody else was so. To be religious when religion is in fashion, how easy is it! But to be religious when religion's ways are everywhere spoken against, there's the difficulty. Noah was like a fish,—fresh in salt waters. He chose rather to swim against the stream, though with trouble and difficulty, than to go down the stream with ease and delight. He was the man that ventured to stem the tide of profaneness, and durst appear for God when no one else appeared for him. *And Noah*

walked with God. He was not only just in his dealings with men, but he walked with God in the serious, conscientious use of all holy ordinances. He kept up his communion with God, his correspondence with heaven; and he did not count it solitary walking, though he had no one else to walk with him. He did like Enoch. He trod in the steps of his great-grandfather. Though Enoch was gone to heaven almost seventy years before Noah was born, yet Noah had heard of Enoch's life, which he took for his copy,—and of Enoch's translation, which he took for his encouragement. Such was Noah,—that Noah who found grace in the eyes of the Lord; a man whom God made more account of than all the giants that were in the earth in those days, who became mighty men, and were of old men of renown; for though greatness may commend us to men, it is goodness only that commends us to God. Noah, 'tis likely, did not find grace in the eyes of men, by his holiness and piety; they would not commend him, because thereby he condemned them. But all was one for that. He was so wise as to prefer the good word of God before the good word of all his neighbours.

2. The evidence of the favour of God to Noah appears in what God said of him, and in what God said to him. He was a good man, and it appears

that God was pleased with him, in that the blessed Spirit doth here proclaim his goodness. So that wherever this book of scripture, this chapter, this verse, shall be read, there shall also this singular piety of Noah be told for a memorial of him. Matt. xxvi. 13. And I cannot but observe how frequently his name is repeated here: no less than five times in about five lines. *Noah* found grace in the eyes of the Lord. These are the generations of *Noah*. *Noah* was a just man. *Noah* walked with God. *Noah* begat three sons. Not only the persons, but the very names of the saints are precious to God, and should be so to us.

11 The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.

12 And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

Here seems to be some intimation of idolatry, superstition, or other depravations in God's worship. The word *corrupt* doth frequently signify idolatrous worship. Exod. xxxii. 7. Deut. xxxii. 5. Judg. ii. 19. 2 Chron. xxvii. 2. And is it not sufficiently experienced that superstition and profaneness go toge-

ther amongst people? Where piety of life is gone, purity of worship, I dare say, is going. Violence and oppression abounded. *The earth was filled with violence*; there was no order, no government amongst them. They were like fishes in the sea, where the greater devour the lesser. The strongest arm and the longest sword carried away all.

The wickedness of that time was universal. It was not here and there,—in a few families or towns,—that these iniquities did abound, but all the world over. Sin was grown common; the disease was epidemical; and no wonder, when it is so catching. Iniquity covered the earth, as the waters cover the sea. How justly then did the deluge cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea. When sin is grown universal, wrath is at the door. While there's a remnant of praying ones to empty the measure as it fills, judgments may be kept off a great while; but when all are filling the measure by sin, and none emptying it by repentance, it will soon be full, and overflow with wrath. When ten righteous men can not be found in five cities, no marvel if fire and brimstone be quickly sent about their ears. Gen. xviii. 32. xix. 24, 25.

Thus have we a draught of the wickedness of the old world. And may we not, as in a glass, see our own face, and the face of the present age

and generation? Doth not sin now abound, and these sins especially? Is not sin become, in a manner, universal?—and is not the root of it the same—heart-corruption? May we not then justly fear the coming of divine vengeance?

13 And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

God's favour to Noah especially appears in what God said to him,—of which we have a large account. He gave him timely notice of the judgment coming; for *the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him*. Psa. xxv. 14. Not only the secrets of his favour, but the secrets of his providence, are revealed to his servants the prophets. Amos iii. 7.

The end of all flesh is come; that is, the utter ruin of mankind is decreed and determined by me, and is approaching: it is even at the door; it is as sure to come, as if it were come already. God's end in telling Noah of this was, 1. That he might prepare for the security of himself and his family; that, being forewarned, he might be forearmed; that, like a prudent man, foreseeing the evil, he

might hide himself, and, not like the simple, pass on and be punished. Prov. xxii. 3. God told Noah of the approaching judgment, because he would not have him involved in it. 2. It was for the trial of his faith. It was a thing very unlikely to sense and reason, that all the world should be drowned. Therefore, saith God, I will try whether Noah will believe me. Faith is tried as well by a threatening, as by a promise. Now Noah did believe that it should be as God said, and he acted accordingly. 3. God told Noah, that he might tell others; (as Abraham, Gen. xviii. 17, 19;) and no doubt he did tell others, and proclaim to the world the judgment that was coming. Noah is called a preacher of righteousness, 2 Pet. ii. 5. He preached by foretelling the flood, and calling people to repentance and reformation, as the only means to prevent the impending judgment.

14 Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.

God gave Noah particular directions about the making of an ark, and told him what he must do when he had made it. The ark was to be a mov-

able house, in which he and his were to be during the flood. It was for size like a house, for shape like a chest or coffer, for use like a ship,—to move upon the waters. The word *tebath*, translated *ark*, occurs only here and in Exod. ii. 3. God did not only bid Noah in general make such a thing, but gave him particular instructions how to make it. He must make it of *gopher wood*. What wood that is, I doubt not, Noah knew better than we do. Some fancy it to be pine, others box, some cedar, others cypress. The matter is not great. To be sure it was some wood fit for the purpose. He was to make rooms in the ark; Heb. *nests*. He must divide it unto several partitions, according to the several kinds of animals. He was to *pitch it within and without*; without, to secure it from the injuries of wind and water; and within, to sweeten it.

15 And this *is the fashion* which thou shalt make it *of*: The length of the ark *shall be* three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.

16 A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above: and the door of the ark shalt

thou set in the side thereof; *with* lower, second, and third *stories* shalt thou make it.

The ark was to be three hundred cubits long; that is, a hundred and fifty yards; for this cubit is generally supposed to be the ordinary cubit—half a yard; fifty cubits broad, that is, twenty-five yards; and thirty cubits high, that is, fifteen yards. “The dimensions of the ark were such as that it would have contained four hundred and fifty thousand square cubits within the walls of it, if it had risen in an exact square to the top; but it sloped in the roof, like the roof of a house, till it came to be but a cubit broad, for which we should allow fifty thousand cubits of abatement; yet will the space be sufficient.” —LIGHTFOOT. Orders were given to Noah to make a window in the ark, which was of great use, 1. To convey light. Without the window, the ark had been a dungeon. 2. By it Noah was enabled to see what desolations were made in the earth; to take a prospect of the dismal providence wherewith it was visited. But some think this window was so placed that Noah could not see any thing but heaven; that God would not set before his eyes such a sad spectacle. ’Twas enough that he himself was saved, though he did not see others drowned.

17 And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein *is* the breath of life, from under heaven ; *and* every thing that *is* in the earth shall die.

18 But with thee will I establish my covenant ; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.

19 And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every *sort* shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep *them* alive with thee ; they shall be male and female.

20 Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every *sort* shall come unto thee, to keep *them* alive.

21 And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather *it* to thee ; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them.

When the ark was made, Noah and his family were to go into it, and to bring the creatures with them,

there to be safe. And, lest he should be at a loss about bringing the creatures together, God promises that *they shall come*. What he could do himself, he must do; but what he could not do, God would do for him. Now in all these things appeared the special favour of God to Noah. God did not only take care to preserve him, but made him the instrument of preservation to others.

God made a gracious promise to Noah, that he would establish his covenant with him; that is, that if Noah would make this ark, and act according to these directions, out of pure respect to the divine command, then he and his should be secured in the ark, and he should be *the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in*; Isa. lviii. 12; and that from him should proceed the world; the church,—which is the soul of the world; and the Messiah,—the head of the church. Or by *my covenant* may be meant the covenant of grace. I will graciously accept thee,—will be well pleased with thee in the Beloved, according to the terms of the everlasting covenant. Eph. i. 6. Heb. xiii. 20.

22 Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.

When God had bidden Noah make an ark, he set

about it. He did firmly believe that what God had threatened, would come to pass; his faith wrought fear; and his faith and fear influenced his obedience. True faith is a working faith. Gal. v. 6. Noah showed his faith by his works; and so must we. *Faith without works is dead.* Jam. ii. 26.

According to all that God commanded him. Upright obedience is universal obedience. The respect, if it be sincere, is to all God's commandments. Psa. cxix. 6. Noah did not obey the general command only to make an ark, but he had an eye to all the particular directions given;—like Moses, who did all according to the pattern showed him in the mount. Ex. xxxix. 42, 43. It is not enough that we do that which is commanded, but we must do it in the appointed manner. Let us not think ourselves wiser than God about gospel institutions. 'Tis generally supposed that it was a hundred and twenty years before the flood, when Noah began to make the ark, because the apostle Peter makes the time of Noah's preparing the ark to run parallel with the time of God's patience: *The long-suffering of God waited while the ark was preparing.* 1 Pet. iii. 20.

Now Noah's building the ark was a sign to the old world of the approaching judgment, and a confirmation of Noah's preaching, and, one would think, would have wrought upon them to repent; for that

which we see, uses to affect us more than that which we hear only. Every blow that was given in building the ark, was a warning,—a fair warning,—to that careless world. 'Twas an evidence that Noah was in good earnest, and did himself believe what he told them; else he would not have put himself to all this trouble. So that Noah was a *preacher of righteousness*, not in word only, but in deed. Ministers should be so. That preacher is likely to do most good, that doth by his practice confirm his doctrine,—whose life is a constant sermon. So Noah's was. 'Twas a wonder that some, at least, were not convinced; that so much warning should be given, and none taken. Did he seem to them all, like Lot to his sons-in-law, as one that mocked? Gen. xix. 14. Such is the success that faithful ministers too commonly meet with. But what was the reason? The reason is plain: *They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage*; Matt. xxiv. 38; they were over-head and ears in sensual pleasures, drowned in carnal delights; and with such as are so I seldom see that the word finds entertainment.

So did he. His obedience is repeated. *Thus did Noah; so did he.* The blessed Spirit loved to speak of his obedience, for indeed it was signal and remarkable. A great many objections Noah might

have made against this, if he had consulted with flesh and blood; as 1. It might have discouraged him that he was alone in this business. We are all apt to do as the most do. Noah might say, why should I be so singular? Is all the world foolish, and am I only wise? 2. It might seem a very unlikely thing that the world should be drowned. How would this consist with the providence, with the goodness, with the wisdom, of God? Will he that made the world, unmake it again? How can this be? 3. The scoffs and jeers which he was likely to meet with might have damped him, and cooled his courage in the undertaking. His neighbours would be ready to christen the ark, *Noah's folly*, and count him no better than an old doting fool for his labour. 4. The building of the ark would be a work of time, and Noah might think, I am an old man, and ten to one I may never live to see it finished; the vision is for a great while to come. Ezek. xii. 27. 5. The difficulty of the work might have been a great discouragement. Must I, he might say, in my old age rear a building such as I never saw? When I have done, how shall I ever get the creatures together, and provide food for them? Must I be myself a prisoner in this cabin, nobody knows how long? It is as good for me to put it to the venture. If the worst come to the worst, I shall fare as well as my neighbours. But the com-

mand of God carried him through all these discouragements, his faith overcame these difficulties; and 'tis upon record, to his immortal honour, that *Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.* Heb. xi. 7.

CHAPTER. VII.

The story of this chapter divides itself into four parts. I. The call of God to Noah to come into the ark; II. The care of God for the rest of the creatures; III. Noah's obedience to the divine call; IV. The coming of the flood, with the causes, and consequences of it.

AND the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.

God had told Noah before that he should come into the ark, and had given him directions so large and particular, that Noah might think he must not expect to hear from God again. But behold the goodness of God in keeping up a correspondence with his servant, for his encouragement under the difficulties of the work. Though Noah knew that when he had made the ark, he must go into it, yet

he staid for a renewed command before he went in. 'Tis good in every thing to go no further than we can see a clear warrant from God to bear us out. Observe, God doth not say, *Go* into the ark; but, *Come* into the ark;—implying that God would go with him; that he would lead him into it, accompany him in it, and in due time bring him safely out of it. The ark was a kind of prison to poor Noah,—an uncomfortable place to be in a year round; but the presence of God with him was enough to countervail that objection. Though the ark was a prison, yet the Lord, that was with Joseph in the prison, (Gen. xxxix. 21, 23,) was also with Noah in this prison: with him,—not only by his common presence, as he is everywhere,—but by his special presence; the presence of his love and favour; his cheering, comforting presence. The want of this presence embitters the sweetest comforts; Exod. xxxiii. 15; but the enjoyment of this presence sweetens the bitterest cross,—for in God's *presence is fulness of joy*. Psal. xvi. 11.

Thou and all thy house. It had been a great mercy to Noah, if he and his wife only had been secured in the ark; but how much greater was it to have all his house secured with him! Noah questionless was, as good men use to be, in care for his family; and it seems that God was in care for it too.

All thy house. Was there not one wicked Ham amongst them,—and must he come into the ark too? Yes. Being one of Noah's sons, though wicked and vile in himself, yet he is secured in the ark for his good father's sake. Wicked children often fare the better for their godly parents' sake. Though the piety of one will not save another from eternal ruin, yet it may have an influence upon salvation from present judgments. The Moabites and Ammonites were once spared because they were the posterity of righteous Lot. Deut. ii. 9, 19. 'Tis good to belong to the family of a good man.

Into the ark. Noah had been very busy about this ark, no question, a great while; many a careful night and many a toilsome day it had cost him. Many a discouraging thought, perhaps, his unbelieving heart did suggest. But all was one for that. He kept his eye upon the command, and that carried him through all the difficulties of the work. And what did he get by it? Not his labour for his pains. No: when he had made the ark, he and his were secured in it; and that security was the reward of his obedience. Whatever we do in obedience to the command of God, we ourselves are likely to have the comfort of it, first or last. God has, in infinite wisdom, so ordered the matter that our duty is our privilege. He has so twisted interests with us, that

in working for him, we work for ourselves; in seeking the things of his honour and glory, we seek the things of our own peace and comfort.

The gospel call now is much like this call of God to Noah. The burden of the song is, *Come, come*. The Spirit saith, come; the word saith, come; ministers say, come. And whither must we come? *Into the ark*; and that ark is Christ. As there was then, so there is now, a deluge of wrath approaching. *All these things shall be dissolved*; 2 Pet. iii. 11; and all those, and those only, that are got by faith into Christ, the ark, shall be saved in the great and terrible day of the Lord. Mark xvi. 16. Is it not our wisdom then to make sure a place in this ark? to close sincerely with Jesus Christ? to accept the gospel offer of redemption and salvation by him? Behold, we are called! O! let us obey the call; because out of the ark is no salvation; in the ark, no condemnation. 1 Cor. xvi. 22. Rom. viii. 1. Besides this great deluge, there are other lesser floods of wrath, which perhaps may be at the door; and when they come, Christ will be the only ark of safety. Those that are in him may promise themselves a *hiding place* from the storm, and a *covert from the tempest*; Isa. xxxii. 2; either in heaven, or under heaven; either in heaven's possession, or under heaven's protection. This call of God to

Noah looks like the call of a tender father to his children that are abroad in the fields. When he sees a storm coming, he calls them into the house. It resembles that in Isa. xxvi. 20; *Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers*. God hath chambers of safety to hide all his people in, in a time of common calamity.

To this gracious call a reason is annexed; *for thee have I seen righteous before me*: an honourable testimony from the mouth of God himself concerning his servant Noah. There was a whole world of wicked people,—the earth was filled with violence; and yet God could see one righteous Noah amongst them all; he could find out one grain of wheat in the midst of that great heap of chaff. The eye of God is upon good men. *The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous*; Psa. i. 6; and knows it, so as to approve of it; so as to reward it. God loves the saints, and therefore keeps his eye upon them. *Ubi amor, ibi oculus*. Many are righteous before men, that are not righteous before God, who *seeth not as man seeth*. 1 Sam. xvi. 7. The hypocrisy of hypocrites may deceive men, but it cannot deceive God.

In this generation; this wicked, profane generation,—this generation of sinners. Noah was good when nobody else was so; kept close to God and duty when all mankind were become apostate. This

did much enhance his righteousness. The world's wickedness was a foil to Noah's godliness, which did thereby, like a diamond set in jet, appear the more illustrious. And this he got by it, that he that was good when all the world was bad, was saved when all the world was drowned. Note. Those that keep themselves pure in times of common iniquity, God will keep safe in times of common calamity. Those that will not partake with others in their sins, shall not partake with them in their plagues. Singular piety shall be rewarded with singular salvation.

2 Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female : and of beasts that *are* not clean by two, the male and his female.

3 Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female ; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth.

As in the creation, though man was the chief, the head of it,—yet other creatures also were, by the same Almighty hand, fearfully and wonderfully made ; so in this great preservation, though it was the preservation of mankind that was principally aimed at, yet other creatures were not neglected. Noah has special directions to secure them in the ark, and

did secure them accordingly. *Doth God take care for oxen?* saith the apostle, 1 Cor. ix. 9. Yes, he doth. But in that law, the main end was not the advantage of the oxen. For oursakes, no doubt, this is written. ver. 10. Yet certainly God doth take care for all creatures, for he preserveth man and beast; Psa. xxxvi. 6; and in this history we have a special evidence of that care.

'Tis doubted how one kind of beasts came to be clean and another kind to be unclean, considering that when the creation was finished, all were very good; and we do not find the law concerning the distinction till Levit. xi. 1, &c., which was promulgated many hundreds of years after this. Some think that the distinction was made by the law of nature. Others think this is spoken by anticipation; that *clean* and *unclean* mean those that were afterwards so differenced, when the ceremonial law was given. But then how could Noah distinguish betwixt them, or know which was which,—the law of that distinction not having then been given? Others think that by *clean* beasts are meant those that were of use for man. And others by *clean* beasts understand those beasts which were to be offered in sacrifice to God; and by *unclean*, those that were not to be so offered. And, though we find no written law of directions in this matter, yet, 'tis very probable

that, together with the law about worshipping God by sacrifices,—which was then transmitted by oral tradition,—directions as to what beasts were to be offered in sacrifice, and what were not to be offered, were transmitted likewise. The clean beasts were more than double in number to the unclean. It is a mercy that those creatures which are useful and serviceable to man, do more abound than those that are hurtful and prejudicial. There are not herds of lions, as there are of oxen; nor flocks of tigers, as there are of sheep; and 'tis well there are not.

None of the fishes were taken into the ark, because they were not to be destroyed in the waters of the flood. As to the birds and beasts, the learned do not agree in the number of the several kinds and sorts of them. Some reckon thirty kinds of creeping things, a hundred and thirty of four-footed beasts, and a hundred and fifty of fowls; of each sort of which there were to be two, and of some, seven; and meat for them all for a year, in the ark. Now to those that seek for occasion to cavil at the Scriptures as not divinely inspired, this is a stone of stumbling. They suppose that there would not be room enough in the ark for all these creatures, and provision for them; but these cavils are sufficiently answered by the learned.

The end of securing the creatures was to keep

seed alive. If all these had been destroyed in the flood, and not a creature left alive, the same Almighty hand that made the creatures at first, could, if Infinite Wisdom had so pleased, as easily have made new ones. But seeing the work of creation was then finished when God rested the seventh day, he chose rather to order their preservation to be in a natural way; for miracles were never multiplied without need. And the reason why God made man the immediate author and instrument of their preservation, might perhaps be this: That the sovereignty and dominion which was at first given, and was after the flood renewed, to man over the rest of the creatures, might seem the more just and reasonable. 'Twas but fit that they should serve man, seeing he had been a means to preserve them. 'Tis not only the prince's honour to rule and govern, but the prince's duty to protect and defend, his subjects. Magistrates are therefore called *the shields of the earth.* Psa. xlvii. 9.

4 For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth.

. After the hundred and twenty years were expired,

they had a reprieve of seven days longer; and we have reason to believe that if any of them had repented and turned to God in these seven days, they had certainly been saved, as Noah was: for though late repentance be seldom true, yet true repentance is never too late. But 'twas all in vain. These seven days were trifled away after all the rest:—divine warnings slighted, divine calls still despised. Were they not without excuse, that would not be led to repentance, no, not by the patience of God? During these seven days, 'tis likely Noah was settling himself in the ark, bringing in his provisions, disposing of the several creatures, and doing what else was needful; all which was a visible sermon to his carnal neighbours. 'Twas strange that none were wrought upon; not one secure sinner startled out of his security,—not one sleeping soul awakened. When God spoke of a hundred and twenty years, they might have some pretence to delay; but when they were told how near the judgment was,—that they had but seven days to turn them in,—that if they would repent, it must be now or never,—one would think they would have begun to look about them, and consider their ways. But, alas! their hearts were hardened through the deceitfulness of sin; Heb. iii. 13; and in that hardness they continued, until the waters of the flood came.

5 And Noah did according unto all that the LORD commanded him.

6 And Noah *was* six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth.

7 And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood.

God bid Noah make an ark, and he did according to all that God commanded him. When the ark was made, God bid him come into it, and bring the creatures with him; and still he *did according to all that the Lord commanded him*. He was not weary in well-doing, (Gal. vi. 9,) did not fail or flag in his duty. Upright obedience is constant obedience. 'Tis not beginning well, but holding on, that gives a title to the reward. Rev. ii. 10.

Noah went into the ark when he was six hundred years old,—a great age. But that God who had taught him from his youth up, and whose wondrous works he had hitherto declared, now also when he was old and grey-headed, did not leave him. Psa. lxxi. 17, 18. God is a Master that doth not use to cast off his old servants.

8 Of clean beasts, and of beasts that *are* not clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the earth,

9 There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah.

'Twas a great mercy to mankind that the creatures were thus preserved for after use, and that without any care or prospect or project of man. Indeed, if God did not take more care of us than we do of ourselves, I know not what would become of us. Though the old world was a provoking, wicked world, and God knew that the new one would be little better, yet he took care for it, (such was his kindness to mankind,) in this matter; and ordered Noah to take the creatures with him into the ark. Take them into the ark! might Noah say,—Lord how can I ever get them in? Can I tame the tiger, or bring the leopard to my foot? Can I lead the lion like a dog into the ark? Will the unicorn be willing to abide in my crib? Job xxxix. 9. And when I have them in, what shall I do with them? If I bring the lion and the lamb into the ark, the lamb will not come out again alive; how should he? But nothing of all this was objected.

10 And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth.

11 In the sixth hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.

As soon as ever the seven days were accomplished, and Noah, with all his tribe, were settled in the ark, the flood came. Though God bears long, yet he will not bear always, with provoking sinners; and patience abused will certainly turn into greater wrath.

By *the fountains of the great deep*, are supposed to be meant the waters under the earth; for that there is an immense mass of subterraneous waters seems evident, by the springs and rivers which are supplied from them as from a common stock. Now the bonds that were laid to keep in these waters were broken up; as a treasure is broken up when the owner hath occasion to use it. Hence God is said to *lay up the depth in storehouses*; (Psa. xxxiii. 7;) out of which storehouses he now brought them. By *the windows of heaven*, are meant the clouds, which were opened

to give a way to the waters that are above the heavens (chap. i. 6) to descend; those waters which were there reserved against this time of trouble, this day of battle and war. Job xxxviii. 22, 23. When rain is withheld, the windows of heaven are said to be shut; and now they were opened. The rain did not come down through pores, drop by drop, as it ordinarily doth; but as through casements, through which mountains of waters did come down. We have heard of such a thing as the bursting of a cloud, when the water hath come down like a spout, in great and incredible quantities: so it was then. In a word, the *bars and doors* which are set to the waters of the sea, and stay the proud waves of it, (Job xxxviii. 9, 10, 11,) were taken down, and those waters swelled upwards. The bond with which the waters are so *bound in the thick clouds* that *the cloud is not rent under them*, (Job xxvi. 8,) was broken and dissolved, and those waters poured downwards; and so, both meeting upon the earth, made the deluge.

12 And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.

This was no ordinary rain. Observe that God was but six days in making the world: That was speed. But he was forty days in destroying the world,

though he could have done it in a moment: That was slowness. Rightly, therefore, is God said to be slow to anger, but plenteous in mercy. *Psa. ciii. 8. Joel. ii. 13.*

1. All creatures both in heaven and earth are at the beck and disposal of the God of heaven. What more ungovernable than the waters? Yet he disposeth of them as pleases him, *whether for correction, or for his land, or for mercy*, as Elihu expresses it, *Job xxxvii. 12, 13.* When Infinite Wisdom pleases, 'tis but condensing the air into water, and the world is drowned; 'tis but loosing the *swaddling band* of the sea, (*Job xxxviii. 9,*) and a flourishing land is turned into a bed of waters;—a sad fate which some countries have witnessed. Should we not then make the inference which Elihu makes of this truth in the chapter before mentioned, *verse 24 ?—Men do therefore fear him.*

2. The great God easily can, and often doth, make that which uses to be for our benefit and comfort, to be for our grief and trouble. What is more useful,—what more needful, than rain, in its season, and in measure? We could not do without it. Yet once rain was made use of to destroy the world. How easily can God make our *table to become a snare*; and *that which should have been for our welfare, to become a trap.* *Psa. lxix. 22.*

13 In the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark ;

As God did at the first make but one woman for one man, so now he preserved but one woman for one man ; and as from the former, so from this, may be drawn an argument against polygamy.

When God removes the righteous from among the wicked, 'tis a sign that judgment is not far off. As soon as ever Noah was shut in the ark, *in the selfsame day* (observe that) the flood came. God could do nothing, to speak with reverence, till then. It is his own expression concerning Lot, Gen. xix. 22: *I cannot do any thing, till thou be come thither*. And when Lot was come thither, vengeance came. Good men are said to be *taken away from the evil to come*. Isa. lvii. 1. 'Tis a sign that war is intended when the ambassador is called home. We may well fear that God is *coming out of his place to punish*, when he calls his *people into their chambers and shuts the doors about them*. Isa. xxvi. 20, 21. Noah's entrance into the ark was the last and the fairest warning the world had of the approaching judgment. One would think that when they saw

Noah gathering up all, bag and baggage, and settling in the ark, they could not choose but conclude he was in earnest; and that this would startle them out of their security. But all would not do. They still remained in their hardness and unbelief; and it was their ruin.

14 They, and every beast after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, and every fowl after his kind, every bird of every sort.

15 And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life.

As Noah could not well bring the creatures together, God did so for him. *They went in unto Noah into the ark* by a special and miraculous instinct. The same hand that brought the creatures to Adam to be named, brought them to Noah to be preserved. The same hand that made them come willingly into the ark, made them lie quietly in the ark, made all their cruel dispositions and ravenous inclinations to cease. As soon as they came into the ark, all their mutual enmities were at an end. Those

creatures could agree there, that could agree nowhere else. Herein the ark was a type of the church of Christ in the latter days, in which it is promised that *the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid*. Isa. xi. 6. This was in part fulfilled when Jews and Gentiles (betwixt whom there was and had been long a mortal feud) lay down together in the ark of the gospel church. The same promise I am hoping and praying and waiting for the further accomplishment of in God's way and time. As the creatures were saved from being drowned in the flood in an ordinary way, so they were saved from being famished in the ark in an ordinary way. God could, by his almighty power, have kept them alive without meat a year round; but, because there was no absolute need of such a miracle, he ordered Noah to feed them with food convenient for them. This would help to keep him and his sons from idleness in the ark. What a great housekeeper is He that provides every day for all the creatures that are upon the face of the earth,—who satisfies the desire of every living thing,—(Ps. cxlv. 15, 16,)—who provideth food for all flesh: for his mercy endureth for ever. Psa. cxxxvi. 25.

16 And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had

commanded him : and the LORD shut him in.

As Noah did continue in his obedience to God, so God did continue in his care of Noah; for *as for God, his way is perfect*. Psa. xviii. 30. What Noah could do himself, that God gave him directions to do, and he did. He could make the ark, and he could go into it when it was made; but he could not shut himself in; not so shut himself in as to keep out the water; and therefore that God did for him. When we have done that which we can ourselves in a way of duty, we may, with comfort, refer the doing of that which we cannot do, to God. Noah did not object, when God bid him go into the ark: to what purpose should I go in? for when I am in, I cannot shut myself in. No: he did his present duty, and as to the rest, he cast all his care upon God, whom he had hitherto found caring for him. 1 Pet. v. 7, *The Lord shut him in*. 1. To secure him and his from all perils and dangers. Noah was one of God's jewels. Now God is said to *make up his jewels*, (Mal. iii. 17,) and so did he make up Noah in the ark. 2. To keep others out. When the flood came, people would be gathering about the ark to get a place there; but when the door was shut, there was no entrance. 'Twas a sad shutting to the poor

perishing world. It cut them off from all hope of safety.

And is there no gospel in all this? Yes, very much. 1. Our great duty is, in obedience to the gospel call, to come into the ark, Christ. It is his command that we believe; and that command makes it our duty to believe. We are not put to the trouble, as Noah was, to prepare an ark ourselves. God himself hath prepared it already. He has found the ransom; he has laid help upon one that is mighty. He is ready; and if we be ready, the work is done. 2. Those that come into the ark themselves should be ready to bring as many with them as ever they can. Noah brought all his family with him, and laboured to bring more, if he could but have persuaded them. Masters of families should strive to bring their families with them to Christ; husbands, their wives; parents, their children. Friends and neighbours should help one another into this ark of safety. There is room enough. *The place is not too strait for us.* 2 Kings vi. 1. There is room enough in Christ; room enough in heaven; in our *Father's house are many mansions.* John xiv. 2. 3. Those that are once got by faith into Christ, the ark, God will take care to shut in so fast that they shall never be turned out again. The almighty power of God shuts the door; for no less than that is engaged for

the perseverance of the saints, who are kept by the power of God. 1 Pet. i. 5. Phil. i. 6. John x. 28, 29. 4. If we dot speedily elcse with the gospel offer, and make haste into Christ the ark, the door will be shut shortly, and it will be too late. Though now the door is open, and whoever will may enter, —though now the Spirit saith, Come,—and the bride saith, Come, Rev. xxii. 17; yet this will not last always: the tune will be altered shortly; and those that will not come now for a blessing, must depart then with a curse. Matt. xxv. 41. The door will be shut, as it was when the foolish virgins came. Perhaps the door may be shut in this life. I believe there is such a thing. Heb. xii. 17. Death will certainly shut the door against all them that persist in their impenitency. There is no getting out of the grave into the ark; as the tree falls by death, so it lies through eternity. It is therefore our great concernment to come by faith to Jesus Christ, and to do it quickly.

17 And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth.

The more the waters increased, the higher the ark was lifted up. From this let us learn the benefit

of afflictions. The more the waters of adversity do increase, the higher are the saints lifted up from things below, to things above. The more earth is embittered to them, the nearer do they get to heaven. Sanctified afflictions, as Mr. Dod was wont to say, are spiritual promotions.

18 And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth ; and the ark went upon the face of the waters.

19 And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth ; and all the high hills, that *were* under the whole heaven, were covered.

20 Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail ; and the mountains were covered.

21 And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beasts, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man :

22 All in whose nostrils *was* the breath of life, of all that *was* in the dry land, died,

That which we say of fire, is true of water; that it is a good servant, but a bad master. Indeed, now it was God's servant, being sent and commissioned by him; but it was the world's master, and great havoc it made. Come then, let us behold the works of the Lord, *what desolations he hath made in the earth.* Psa. xlv. 8. Desolations indeed; for,

1. All creatures,—all fowls, and cattle, and creeping things, died. And why so? Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? and was it right to destroy innocent creatures with guilty men? 2 Sam. xxiv. 17. No doubt God could, if he had so pleased, have made a difference; he could have sent some sweeping judgment which would have destroyed all mankind, and done the rest of the creatures no hurt. But he choose rather to destroy all together. Some of the reasons of this may be, (1.) That when man was gone, there would be no more occasion for the rest of the creatures. They were made for the use and service, for the comfort and benefit, of man. When the master of the house dies, the house is broken up, and the goods disposed of. Man was the master of this great house, and therefore when he went, all the furniture went with him. (2.) The creatures themselves groaned, desiring to be delivered from that vanity which they were subject to, by being made instruments of man's sin to the dis-

honour of God, their maker. Rom. viii. 21, 22, 23.

(3.) 'Twas according to the law and custom of war, that not only the rebels themselves, but all theirs, should be put to the sword. Saul sinned in sparing even the sheep and oxen, when he was sent to destroy Amalek. 1 Sam. xv. 9, 23. (4.) God destroyed the beasts with man, to evidence the greatness of his wrath. The world was very wicked; and therefore God, to show that he was very angry, did extend his wrath even to the brute creatures. Anyone will say that sin must needs be a very evil thing which did provoke a gracious God to so much wrath. (5.) God's sovereignty over the creatures doth free him from any injustice herein. Did not he make all the creatures, and therefore were they not his own, and might he not justly do what he would with his own? And if he would, for the manifestation of his own glory, destroy them all, who shall say unto him, What doest thou?

2. Besides the brute creatures, every man, woman, and child, died. How fully peopled the world then was, we may imagine, if we consider that it had been created above sixteen hundred years; and that men, living very long, and having many children, must needs increase and multiply greatly. Observe, (1.) What posture the flood found them in. We have an account of it from the mouth of Christ

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himself. *They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage.* Luke xvii. 26, 27. They were drowned in security and sensuality; crying peace, peace; saying, *tomorrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant*; Isa. lvi. 12; stark deaf, and stark blind, to divine warnings. They were over head and ears in carnal delights and pleasures; eating and drinking; but not praying, or hearing, or repenting. Was it not sad that death found them in this posture? and with how little comfort would they look him in the face! (2.) We may well imagine what terror and consternation seized on them when they saw the flood come indeed. Methinks I hear their shrieks, and groans, and cries; bemoaning themselves and their own folly, now it was too late. A while ago they were laughing at Noah, and calling him a fool; but now they see that they themselves were fools, and he only wise. Perhaps some climb up the highest trees, hoping to be secure there; but to no purpose. The waters swell, and soon afford them a grave. Others perhaps get upon the top of some high mountain, and there spend a few days in terror and anguish; but first or last, the flood reaches them. Nay, it may be, some clamber about the ark, and even get upon the top of it, but a dash of water sweeps them off, and buries them with their neighbours. Methinks I hear others

begging of Noah to let them in ; thousands of rams and ten thousands of rivers of oil, if they had them, they would give with all their hearts, for a place in the ark. O Noah, open the door, or we are lost. Were not we thy neighbours? Have we not eaten and drunk in thy presence?—and hast not thou preached many a time in our streets? Ay, might Noah say, that I have, to little purpose. I called indeed, but you refused; I stretched out my hand, but no man regarded; you set at nought my counsel, and would none of my reproof; and now I may laugh at your calamity. Prov. i. 24, 25, 26. Now you see what comes of sin. Your ways and your doings have brought this destruction upon yourselves. You may thank yourselves for your ruin. I offered you a room in the ark, and you laughed at me for my labour; but now God has shut the door, and I cannot open it. Thus it will be in the great day. A remnant will, like Noah, be secured in the ark, and with the wise virgins go in unto the marriage. Matt. xxv. 10. But as for the rest of the poor perishing world, they will seek for places of refuge; will call to the rocks and the mountains to cover them; but that will not do. They will plead hard for admission: *Lord, Lord, open to us*; but neither will that do. Matt. xxv. 11. They will be glad to scrape acquaintance with the righteous. The foolish virgins would

be beholden to the wise now for a little oil; (Matt. xxv. 8;) but neither will that do: it will be too late. Though men may climb never so high by an outward profession, if they do not get into the ark, they are undone; undone for ever. Salvation itself cannot save them. (3.) Of those that were drowned, perhaps some had been assistant to Noah in building the ark; and yet now could not obtain a place in it. This is the case of wicked ministers, that are perhaps instrumental in bringing others to Christ, but do not come to him themselves; that help others to heaven, but are themselves cast into hell. (1.) Concerning the eternal state of these sinners—these sinners against their own souls—it is not within our line to judge. What mercy God might show to some of them, we know not; but we have reason to believe that most of them, if not all, perished eternally; for they are called *spirits in prison*. 1 Pet. iii. 19. The water of the flood sent them to the fire of hell. Here's a world of sinners drowned and damned together. A sad change from eating and drinking on earth, to be weeping and wailing in hell.

23 And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and

the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven ; and they were destroyed from the earth : and Noah only remained *alive*, and they that *were* with him in the ark.

24 And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days.

There was mercy in the midst of wrath. When all the world besides were monuments of God's justice, righteous Noah remained a monument of his mercy, his sparing mercy. We may suppose Noah to have been all this time in an afflicted condition ; meeting with many difficulties and inconveniences, and yet in the way of duty ; ay, and in the way of deliverance too. It is no new thing for God's gracious deliverances of his people to be accompanied with hardships and inconveniences. The way from Egypt to Canaan lay through a vast howling wilderness. The way to salvation, both temporal and eternal, both public and personal, is not always a ready road, nor always a pleasant path. But to fall out with deliverance as the Israelites did, (Numb. xiv. 3, 4,) and to quarrel with the salvation offered, because of the difficulties we meet with in the way, is just as if Noah should have wished rather

to be drowned in the flood, than to be imprisoned in the ark. As he might comfort himself under the inconveniences of the ark, with the consideration of his deliverance by the ark; so a child of God may comfort himself under the greatest troubles that he meets with in the world, with the sense that he has of his interest in Christ: sick, but in Christ; dying, but in Christ; the way stony and thorny, but life eternal at the end of it.

From the whole history of the destruction of the old world, we may learn (and the Lord teach us) these six good lessons: 1. That God is a holy and righteous God; true to his threatenings as well as to his promises. It appears that he did hate sin, or he would never have drowned the world for it. 2. That the sin of sinners will, without repentance, be the ruin of sinners, first or last, sooner or later. Though sin may be pleasing or profitable in the commission, yet it will be bitterness in the latter end. If God be true, it will. Prov. xxiii. 32. It is therefore our wisdom to *stand in awe, and sin not*. Psal. iv. 4. 3. That the God with whom we have to do, is a terrible God; and that it is a fearful thing to fall into his hands. Heb. x. 31. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, let us be persuaded to fear before him. 2 Cor. v. 11. 4. That the more divine warnings are slighted, and the longer divine patience is

abused, the greater and more terrible will vengeance be when it comes. 5. That the wrath of God is irresistible wrath. When God judges, he will overcome; and the stoutest sinner will, in the end, find to his cost, that it is in vain to fight against God. Isa. xxvii. 4. Who can stand before him, when he is angry? 6. That *though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished*. Prov. xi. 21. With men, many times the multitude of offenders prevents the punishment of the offence; but it is not so with God. He cannot be out-witted nor overpowered; no, not by a world of sinners. Though the way of wickedness were then *a trodden way*, yet they *were cut down out of time; their foundation was overflowed with a flood*; as Eliphaz expresses it, Job xxii. 15, 16,—I suppose with reference to this history,—that we might *hear and fear, and do no more presumptuously*. Deut. xvii. 13.

CHAPTER VIII.

This chapter gives us an eminent instance of the truth of that sweet word, I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made. Isa. lvii. 16. We have God, in the former chapter, contending; contending in wrath with a world of sinners; but did he contend for ever? Was he always wroth? No: this chapter gives us an account how those contendings ceased, and how, at length, an end was put to that anger.

AND God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that *was* with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters asswaged.

2 The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained.

Hitherto justice had played its part for a hundred and fifty days together; but at length justice gives way, and mercy takes its place. This was seen in the abating of the waters from the earth. When they had done their work,—when they had destroyed all flesh, except those that were in the ark, they were called back again; for it is God's usual way, when he hath accomplished his whole work by afflictions, then, and not till then, to remove them. As they shall come no sooner, so they shall stay no longer, than need is. 1 Pet. i. 6. Though *weeping may endure for a night, joy cometh in the morning.* Psa. xxx. 5. So it was here. The world we live in is a world of changes. Sometimes there is a change from better to worse. Such a change there was when the flood came; and it was a sad change: a beautiful world was turned into ruins, for the iniquity of them that dwelt therein. Psa. cvii. 34. Sometimes there is a change from worse to better. Such a change there was when the flood went away; and it was a comfortable change, and a large account we have of it in this chapter.

1. This blessed change came from the same fountain from which all other blessed changes flow,—even the free mercy and goodness of God: *God remembered Noah.* Noah might begin to think that God had forgotten him, and that when he shut him up in

the ark, he shut him out of his care. When he considered how long God had kept him prisoner, it was no wonder if unbelief was at work,—if he was disposed to say with the psalmist, *How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever?* Psa. xiii. 1. Though God may sometimes keep his people long in trouble, yet he will at last remember them. Though Zion may sometimes say, and think she has cause to say, *the Lord hath forsaken me; my Lord hath forgotten me;* yet it will appear otherwise at last. Isa. xlix. 14, 15, 16. The people of God, though in trouble, being never out of his sight, are never out of his mind. It is therefore their wisdom to tarry the Lord's leisure. Never was any one yet a loser by waiting upon God. His time is the best time. *The Lord is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him.* Isa. xxx. 18.

And every living thing. God remembered not man only, but the cattle also; for his care extends to all creatures. He that brought them into the ark, remembered them now they were in the ark.

2. This change was effected by *a wind which God made to pass over the earth.* As the justice of God had water enough ready to drown the earth,—for he holdeth *the waters in the hollow of his hand,* Isa. xl. 12,—so the mercy of God hath a wind ready to dry the earth; for *he hath gathered the wind in*

his fists. Prov. xxx. 4. Wind and water,—two most unruly elements,—are at the disposal of the God of heaven, and he causes them to come as pleases him. This wind did not come by chance, but by the will and appointment of God, who brought it, as he doth all the winds, *out of his treasures.* Ps. cxxxv. 7. He could have dried the earth without a wind; but he chooses to work by his providence,—by means and second causes, to manifest their constant subordinancy to, and total dependance upon, himself, the great first cause.

3 And the waters returned from off the earth continually; and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated.

Continually; Heb. *going and returning;* which notes their gradual departure. They were not removed all at once, but by degrees. The waters *assuaged*, they *were abated*, they *decreased*, and at last *were dried up.* As the flood came by degrees, so it went by degrees. The earth was neither drowned in a day, nor dried in a day. This is God's usual way in working deliverances for his people; he doth it gradually; not *per saltum*; not suddenly. Deut. vii. 22. We are to take notice of God's motions of

mercy towards us, and to meet him with thankfulness; and not to *despise the day of small things*; Zech. iv. 10; but to hope, and wait, and pray, for the day of great things. Thus it is with the work of grace in the heart. The waters of corruption with which the soul is overwhelmed, are carried off by degrees: now one lust is mortified by this ordinance; then another corruption is weakened by that providence; till at last the ark of the soul is brought to rest upon the mountains of holiness in the kingdom of glory. Prov. iv. 18.

4 And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.

The effect of the abating of the waters was the resting of the ark, which was, no doubt, matter of rejoicing to Noah. This was upon *the seventeenth day of the seventh month*; not the seventh month from the beginning of the flood, but the seventh month of the year,—just five months from the beginning of the flood, or a hundred and fifty days, allowing thirty days to each month. But Dr. Lightfoot thinks that by *the seventh month* is meant, the seventh month of the flood.

The place where the ark rested was *the mountains of Ararat*. These mountains are generally sup-

posed to be the mountains of Taurus, in Armenia; though others take them for the Caucasian mountains, between the Black and the Caspian seas.

5 And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month : in the tenth *month*, on the first *day* of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen.

6 And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made.

It was two months and a half after the ark rested, before the the tops of the mountains were seen. The ark would draw deep in the water, and so rest upon the mountains before the water was off. This was for the trial and exercise of Noah's faith, and it ended with comfort to him.

Though God shut the door upon Noah, yet he left him a window for his benefit and comfort; and he made use of it accordingly. We do not find that he opened the window until now, and perhaps he had now direction from God to do it.

7 And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth.

8 Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground ;

9 But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark, for the waters *were* on the face of the whole earth : then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark.

10 And he stayed yet other seven days ; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark ;

11 And the dove came in to him in the evening ; and, lo, in her mouth *was* an olive leaf pluckt off : so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth.

12 And he stayed yet other seven days ; and sent forth the dove ; which returned not again unto him any more,

Noah sent forth a raven and a dove so see how things went abroad ; for he himself was shut up, as it were, in a dungeon, and could see nothing. Perhaps the raven might return unto the ark, though

'tis likely she did not come into it again; for there is but one mention of the sending of her forth. Being a bird of prey, she took up with the food which she found,—the carcasses which were floating upon the waters. But though the raven did not come back to Noah, yet that very circumstance was an evident token that the waters were abated. That would not, however, serve Noah. He was undone to know more, that he might be better satisfied of God's care of him, which now perhaps he began to question. He therefore sent out a dove. It is observed of a dove, that when she flies abroad, she will be sure to return to her own nest at night, how far distant soever. The first time she *found no rest for the sole of her foot*; for though the tops of the mountains appeared, yet they were muddy and dirty, and she did not like to rest there; and therefore came back to the ark, bringing no comfortable tidings to Noah. The second time she brought him an olive leaf, the nature of which is to remain green and fresh even under water. The olive branch perhaps became an emblem of peace and good tidings from this passage. This raven may remind us of a wicked man, who finds in the world that which satisfies him. What he meets with there serves him very well. But the gracious soul, like this dove, finds no rest any where but in the ark,—but in Christ. The

waters of affliction and the mud of corruption which he meets with in the world, drive him to that only source of comfort. *Return unto thy rest, O my soul: Heb. unto thy Noah. Psa. cxvi. 7.* Christ only is rest to a gracious soul.

13 And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, in the first *month*, the first *day* of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth: and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry.

The evidences that Noah had hitherto had were but uncertain. He had a mind to see with his own eyes; and, in order thereto, *removed the covering of the ark*: not the whole covering, but so much of it as would enable him to have a prospect of the face of the earth. Now the prospect he had was a most comfortable prospect; for, *behold, the face of the ground was dry*. What a welcome sight was this to Noah, who had not seen a spot of dry ground for almost a year! How glad he was of it, and how thankful for it, those may best imagine who have known, by experience, what such a change means. How often do we see the dry land about us, and are

not sensible of the comfort of it, nor thankful for it, as we should be. Mercies continued do not affect us so much as mercies restored. The most common mercies are usually the most slighted mercies. The drying of the earth is again and again mentioned as an instance of the power of God; even the same power that did at first make it dry land. Gen. i. 9. And certainly it was no less than almighty power that could do it. What cannot this God do? Is the soul overwhelmed with corruptions and temptations; or with doubts and fears; with dejections and despondencies? He can by the warm beams of his grace remove those corruptions, dispel those doubts, and and restore comfort to the soul. If a church or state be subjected to confusion and disorder, how easily can he create peace. Isa. lvii. 19. How easily can he turn the storm into a calm.

14 And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried.

15 And God spake unto Noah, saying,

16 Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee.

Noah had been in the ark just a year and ten days. The earth was dry almost two months before; but God would not let Noah go out then, because though it was free from water, yet it was not ready for his reception. It would have been very unwholesome, and perhaps might have been injurious to the health, if not destructive of the lives, of Noah and his family, to have gone abroad then. God knows what is good for us better than we do ourselves. He knows how long it is convenient that afflictions should last better than we do. We are commonly in haste for mercies, like children crying for fruit before it is ripe; and it is our folly so to be. Noah, though perhaps he might have a mind to go out, yet did not stir till God bid him *go forth*. He had waited long for deliverance, and it came at last. As divine justice, so divine mercy, though sometimes it comes slowly, yet always comes surely. *He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.* Heb. x. 37. And therefore though he tarry, that is, though he seem to us to do so, wait for him. Hab. ii. 3. Isa. xxx. 18. As God will be sought unto, so he will be waited upon, for mercy. Psal. xxvii. 14. Lam. iii. 26. Noah had a command to go into the ark, and was resolved to stay for a command to go out of it. Though the ark was a prison to him, and though he saw that the ground was dry, yet he waited the

Lord's leisure. . He would not go out, without a *bene discessit* from him that put him in. He staid till the same hand that shut the door opened it again. Our comings out of affliction are then sweet indeed, when we can hear the voice of God bidding us come out, or see the hand of God leading us out.

Goforth. God said to Noah, *come in*, but *go forth*, not *come forth*; that would have intimated as if he had not been in the ark with him. God did not only come in with him, but staid in with him all the while, and brought him safe out; for he hath said, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* Heb. xiii. 5.

17 Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee, of all flesh, *both* of fowl and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth.

18 And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him :

19 Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, *and* whatsoever

creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark.

The creatures accompanied Noah into the ark, and now they must accompany him out of it. He was to go out first, and they were all to follow him. Here was an epitome of the whole world; all brought into a very little compass. God would have Noah to have the honour of repairing the world, and would thus engage anew the creatures to submit to his dominion. And he did bring them forth accordingly; and did, as it were, present them to God, the great Master. Noah was faithful to the trust reposed in him. He had all the creatures at his mercy, and might have starved them if he would; but he took care of them all.

As Noah did not go forth till God bid him, so when God had bid him, he did not delay a moment. He was not angry and sullen, and because he should not go when he would, would not go at all. He did not stumble at difficulties, but was in all points obedient to the heavenly vision.

20 And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

This is the first altar that we read of in scripture. 'Tis likely there were altars before, for there were sacrifices. Chap. iv. 3, 4. This altar Noah built without an express, particular command. Hitherto he had done nothing without special direction from God himself. He staid for a command to go into the ark, and for a command to come out again. But when he was out, he did not stay for a command to be thankful; but immediately falls a rearing an altar and offering burnt offerings; to teach us how forward we should be in our returns of praise for mercies received. He gives twice, we say, that gives quickly. In this matter certainly the sooner the better. While the mercy is fresh, then we shall be the more enlarged in praise. We are very apt to cool by delays. The sense of mercy, as well as the sense of sin, is commonly worn off by time. The Samaritan leper, as soon as ever he saw that he was cleansed, returned to give thanks. Luke xvii. 15. As God prevents us with mercy before we call; (Ps. xxi. 3. Isa. lxxv. 24;) so we should prevent him with praise before he calls. *Praise waits for thee, O God, in Zion.* Ps. lxxv. 1. God is greatly pleased with waiting praises. In this, as in other things, he loves a cheerful giver. Noah was come into a dismal, desolate place; and one would have thought he would have begun with a house for himself. No; he begins

with an altar for God; seeking first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; knowing that that was the way to have other things added to him. Matt. vi. 33. He begins well that begins with God.

Noah builded an altar; and was that all? No: that altar was a smoking altar. He took of every clean beast and of every clean fowl; that is, he took those creatures that were appointed for sacrifice. It is not enough that we do that which is appointed; but we must do it in the appointed manner. We must wait upon God, not only in a right ordinance, but in a right order. Noah offered but one of a sort,—the odd seventh; but God accepted him, because he offered according to his ability. Christ preferred a mite thrown into the treasury by a poor widow, before pounds offered by rich merchants. Mark xii. 43, 44. God expects from us according to what we have, and not according to what we have not. 2 Cor. viii. 12. Noah might have said, Have I kept the creatures in the ark thus long to preserve seed alive, and must I now kill thus many of them and burn them for sacrifice? Why cannot this be put off till there shall be more plenty of cattle in the world? But to give a signal evidence of the sincerity of his love, and a speedy testimony of the reality of his thankfulness, he doth so far deny his own profit, as when he hath but seven sheep in the world,

to take one and offer it for a sacrifice to almighty God. Observe here the antiquity of religious worship. The very first thing we find done in the new world, was an act of divine worship. Religion got the start at first, though profaneness has since out-run it, as Ahimaaz did Cush. 2 Sam. xviii. 23.

21 And the LORD smelled a sweet savour ; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake ; for the imagination of man's heart *is* evil from his youth ; neither will I again smite any more every living thing, as I have done.

Acceptance was then the promised reward of well-doing. Gen. iv. 7. Never any duty performed aright, was performed without acceptance. The Lord was pleased with the offering of Noah : he was glad to see him so thankful,—glad to see the new world begin so hopefully. *The Lord smelled a sweet savour*, Heb. *a savour of rest* ; such a savour as did make his anger to cease, or such a savour as was pleasing to him. Now the fruit and effect of this acceptance was, a gracious promise that he would never drown the world again. So that the respect which God had to Christ, represented in this sacri-

fice, and to the faith and grace of Noah the sacrificer, was the occasion of his declaration for the world's standing. Doubtless it was good news to Noah to hear that the world should never be drowned again. The flood was the fruit of God's curse; by which it appears what a terrible thing the curse of God is. Those whom he curses are cursed indeed.

For the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth. This was rendered as the reason why God would destroy the world; (chap. vi. 5;) and a very good reason it was. But how it should come in as a reason why he would not *again smite every living thing*, is not easy to determine. I should have thought God would have said, I will curse the ground again and again, till I see man in a better frame; for the imagination of man's heart is still evil from his youth. No: he saith, Though man hath a corrupt, wicked heart within him, I will not again curse the ground. The goodness of God is infinite goodness, or else it had been long since overcome and conquered by man's badness. God's end in punishing sinners is to reform them; and sometimes where that end is not attained, he'll punish no more in this world. God sometimes denies reclaiming means,—and afflictions amongst the rest,—to those that will not be reclaimed. Parallel to this scripture is Isa. i. 5, *Why should ye be stricken any*

more? ye will revolt more and more; and perhaps also Hos. iv. 17, Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone. Observe how God's goodness takes occasion from man's badness to be so much the more glorified. This is one of those strange reasons of mercy such as Hos. ii. 13, 14, She went after her lovers, and forgot me; therefore will I allure her; and Isa. lvii. 17, 18, He went on frowardly: I have seen his ways, and will heal him:—enough to melt a heart of stone.

We all bring into the world with us corrupt hearts. How early doth the corruption work. How largely, how constantly doth it put forth even in the best; for who can say his heart is clean? The enlightened soul sees the filthiness of the heart, and it is a lamentation to him. It was so to blessed Paul. Rom. vii. 24. See Psa. li. 5.

22 While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease.

God seems to intimate to Noah by this expression that the earth should not remain always, but should have an end. The promise of God is the firm foundation upon which the course of nature is built and established; and though there have been great

changes in the world, yet this course of nature was never overturned. Though there have often been, and may be, some inequalities in the seasons; wet and cold summers; dry and warm winters; dark days, and light nights; yet these seasons did never totally cease, but still remain in a regular and orderly course, succeeding each other. This present world is a changeable world,—full of vicissitudes; but the world to come is an unchangeable world. The promise here given is called God's *covenant of the day* and his *covenant of the night*, Jer xxxiii. 20; and is mentioned there to strengthen our faith and confirm our hope in the promises of the covenant of grace. He that has been as good as his word in the one, will certainly be so in the other also; for it is an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure, and should be all our salvation and all our desire. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

CHAPTER IX.

Four things we have in the history of this chapter: I. The covenant that God made with Noah and his sons, and with every living creature, after they came out of the ark; II. The seal and token of that covenant, which was the rainbow; III. A particular passage of story concerning Noah and his sons; IV. An account of the age and death of Noah.

AND God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

In the foregoing chapter we had Noah blessing God, building an altar, and returning thanks for mercies received; and here we have God blessing Noah; bestowing and promising to bestow more mercies upon him and his. God is said to honour those that honour him; 1 Sam. ii. 30; and to love

those that love him. Prov. viii. 17. So also doth he bless those that bless him. Man blesses God by speaking good of him. God blesses man by doing good to him. Thankfulness for past mercies is a good way of begging future mercies. God, like the husbandman, loves to sow his seed upon fruitful ground.

Be fruitful and multiply. This is not a command, of which they are transgressors that never marry, or that have no children; but a promise that they should be fruitful. The same is said to the fishes, (chap. i. 22,) which are not under any law. Fruitfulness is the effect of God's blessing. The fruitfulness of the body is so, for *the fruit of the womb is his reward*; Psa. cxxvii. 3: the fruitfulness of the estate is so; for *the blessing of the Lord maketh rich*; Prov. x. 22: the fruitfulness of the soul is so; for *from me is thy fruit found*. Hos. xiv. 8. *Replenish the earth.* This promise we see accomplished: the earth is filled and replenished, and probably was so in a short time after the promise was made. The blessing of God is an operative blessing.

2 And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth,

and upon all the fishes of the sea ; into your hand are they delivered.

Adam, in innocency, seems to have ruled the creatures by love ; but Noah and his sons must rule them by fear. That difference sin has made. Man did not get this power himself, but he had it from God ; and therefore God is to be acknowledged in it. But how is this promise fulfilled, when we see many of the creatures without any fear of man at all ? 1. Some of the creatures are totally subdued to man's yoke ; and that is the fruit and effect of this promise. Is not the fear of man upon the horse ; else would he not scorn to be saddled, and bridled, and ridden by a child that has not a tenth part of his strength ? 2. Some of the wildest have been tamed and subdued. So saith the apostle. Jam. iii. 7. 3. Those that are most fierce and irreclaimable have, notwithstanding, some restraint upon them. Now what is that bridle of restraint, but the fear and the dread of man ? What is it that keeps wolves out of our houses, and lions out of our streets, and makes them to abide in the wilderness, but this fear and dread ? When we see the effects of this fear upon the creatures, we should remember to give God the glory ; whose powerful, wise, and gracious hand hath made such a hedge of protection and wall of defence around mankind.

3 Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you ; even as the green herb have I given you all things.

'Tis doubted whether, before this, flesh was eaten or not. 1. Some think it was. They say we are not to suppose that what is given here, was not given before ; for that fruitfulness and dominion over the creatures is here not first given, but only renewed ; that beasts were before killed for sacrifice, and what should hinder but that they might be eaten ? 2. Most interpreters think that, before the flood, they did not eat flesh, but only herbs and the fruits of the earth. Gen. i. 29. The reason why this liberty was granted now and not before, is supposed to be because the flood had taken away much of the strength and virtue of the earth, and had perhaps some influence upon the bodies of men, making them to stand in need of more nourishing food than herbs and roots. 'Tis supposed that the difference was not now made which was afterwards put between the creatures by the ceremonial law, making some clean, and others unclean. Lev. xi. Noah and his sons might eat of any, asking no question for conscience sake. This liberty, which was afterwards straitened by the yoke of ceremonies, is enlarged to us by the gospel of freedom ; for to us *every creature of God is good,*

and nothing to be refused. 1 Tim. iv. 4. It is a great mercy that we have this liberty. How liberal is God in administering to the benefit and comfort of man. Other creatures die that we may live; they are destroyed that we may be maintained. It would be good sometimes to think what abundance of creatures we have lived upon the ruins of, that we may study what we shall render unto God, (Psa. cxvi. 12,) who doth not only hold our souls in life by daily preservation, (Psa. lxvi. 9,) but doth also maintain our souls in life by daily supplies. Psa. cxlv. 15. This grant was a recompence to Noah for his care of the creatures in the ark. He had kept them safe; and now God gave them to him for his labour. He had fed them; and now, to make him amends, they shall feed him. Obedience will certainly redound to our own comfort, first or last.

4 But flesh with the life thereof, *which* is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.

God had now enlarged man's liberty as to his food; but, lest man should turn the grace of God into wantonness, and that liberty into licentiousness, (1 Pet. ii. 16,) here is a restraint laid upon him. "Though I give you a dominion over the creatures, yet you must not turn that dominion into cruelty.

You may be kings, but you must not be tyrants." This prohibition forbade the eating the flesh of a creature whilst it was alive,—the tearing away the member of a living creature, and eating it,—and the eating of raw flesh. They were not to eat the flesh with the blood thereof, as the soldiers did in haste. 1 Sam. xiv. 32. Blood is called the life, not here only, but in Lev. xvii. 14, and in Deut. xii. 23; and it is so called, perhaps, because it is the general nourishment of the whole body. The blood is, as it were, the vehicle of nutriment; conducting and carrying to the several parts that which keeps them alive. But what reasons were there for this command? It was to show them that, though they were lords over the creatures, yet they were subjects of the great Creator,—who had therefore power to forbid and command what pleased him. It was to convince them that though they were princes, yet they were not sovereigns; though they were governors, yet they were not supreme. This law was a hedge about the law that forbids murder. God forbade them to eat blood, lest they should thereby get a habit of cruelty. To prevent their shedding the blood of men, they must not even eat the blood of beasts. The unparalleled cruelty of the emperor Caligula was, by some, imputed to his nurse; who, they say, was wont to rub her breast

with blood. This law is not obligatory upon us now. The declaration of the apostle, that *every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused*, seems to enlarge our liberty in this respect; for the gospel of Christ is a gospel of liberty.

5 And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of men; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man.

Self-murder is here forbidden. Those that, by their own hands, separate their souls from their bodies, and send them into the presence of God, will be confounded with the question, *How camest thou in hither?* Matt. xxii. 12.

If a beast killed a man, he was to be put to death. This was afterwards confirmed by the law of Moses. Exod. xxi. 23. Levit. xvii. 11. Here was another hedge about the law against murder. To show the evil of that sin, and how much God did hate it, he tells them the very beasts should be punished for it.

What the requiring here mentioned is, we may gather from the prayer of Zechariah, 2 Chron. xxiv. 22. When God requires the life of a man at the

hands of him that has taken it away, he cannot render up that which is required, and therefore must render up his own instead of it. Noah and his sons had lately seen the wrath of God revealed from heaven against the violence and oppression of the old world. But God had just told them that he would never drown the world again. Lest they should think, therefore, "we may kill and slay, and do what we will,—we need not fear another flood,"—he gives them this caution: he tells them that he can avenge innocent blood other ways than by a deluge.

6 Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.

This makes the punishment of murder to be death, and who will not say it is a righteous law; a law which has left abiding impressions upon the hearts even of those that are perfect strangers to the God that made it? With most of the Heathen nations, murder was accounted a capital crime. This law was to be executed by the magistrate; by a man clothed with authority and vested with power for that purpose; a man that hath a sword put into his hand, to make him a terror to evil-doers, in which

he is the minister of God. Rom. xiii. 4. Magistrates are to take special care that the law is executed upon murderers. 'Tis their duty; and they bring the guilt of innocent blood upon their own heads, if they neglect it. *A man that doeth violence to the blood of any person, shall flee to the pit, to the gallows; let no man stay him.* Prov. xxviii. 17. Some look upon this as the institution of magistracy; a standing ordinance of God in the world, for the good of mankind; for magistrates are intrusted with power, not for destruction, but for edification; or if for destruction of particular members, yet for the edification of the whole body. Before the flood, it should seem that God took all judgment to himself. He arraigned, examined, convicted, condemned, and reprieved Cain. But after the flood, it pleased God to take men to be his vicegerents in government; to put into the hands of magistrates a sword to wield for him. Magistrates are called gods; because to them this word of God came. John x. 34, 35.

To this law a reason is annexed: *for in the image of God made he man.* Though this image was in part lost by sin, yet there are some marks of it remaining. Though a man be wicked, and, as such, hath not the image of God's holiness; yet having a spiritual, immortal soul within him, he doth therein

retain somewhat of God's essence. Now this image of God upon man is not only his honour and dignity, but also his safety and security. Man must not be killed, because he hath God's image upon him. Murder is a defacing of the image of God, and is therefore *crimen læsæ majestatis*; no less than high treason against the crown and dignity of the King of heaven. The reason, *for in the image of God made he man*, though it reaches to all men, yet it doth in an especial manner extend to two sorts of men. 1. To magistrates, who have the image of God's power; and 2. To saints, who have the image of God's holiness. So that whoever kills either a magistrate or a saint, doth thereby offer double violence to the image of God.

7 And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.

Such a blessing as this we had before pronounced by God upon Adam and Eve, in the day wherein they were created. Gen. i. 28. Adam and Noah agreed in this, that they were both the common fathers of mankind. We are all the children of one Noah, as well as of one Adam; the wisdom of God ordering it so, that it might be an engagement

upon us to live and love as brethren; being *members one of another*. Ephes. iv. 25. *Let there be no strife between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen; for we are brethren*. Gen. xviii. 8.

8 And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying,

9 And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you;

10 And with every living creature that *is* with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth.

The old world having been destroyed by water, and a new one being to be raised out of the family of Noah, God doth here make a solemn covenant with them; and not with them only, but with their seed after them, and with all the creatures. God made this covenant with the brute creatures, because, though they were not in a capacity to stipulate, or to perform any thing as their part of the covenant, yet they were in a capacity to receive the benefit of the promises of that covenant. How

weak then is the argument which is commonly urged against infant baptism ;—that children are not in a capacity to promise or engage for any thing. It is true they are not while they are in their infancy ; yet they are capable of receiving the benefits, and partaking of the privileges and promises, of the gospel covenant; *for the promise is unto you, and to your children.* Acts ii. 39.

11 And I will establish my covenant with you ; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood ; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.

Blessed be God, he has been as good as his word. It was a mercy that he would make such a promise for our comfort and encouragement. Let us herein acknowledge both the mercy and the truth of God : his mercy in making this promise,—his truth in performing it. And let us not think that because the world is not drowned as the old world was, it is therefore better than that ; but let us give the glory of the world's preservation to the goodness and faithfulness of God.

This promise doth not hinder the destruction of particular places by water ; a calamity which has

been frequent in some countries. Nor doth it hinder the destruction of the world at the last day by fire, when heaven and earth shall pass away, and all these things shall be dissolved. 2 Pet. iii. 11, 12. We have reason to believe that there is such a day coming; for God hath told us so: and faithful is he that hath said it, who also will do it. Sin, that drowned the old world, will burn this. But God has promised that there shall not be another universal deluge; and upon that we may safely rely. This promise is mentioned to illustrate the covenant of grace. *As I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee.* Isa. liv. 9. And he that has been faithful in the one, will be faithful in the other.

12 And God said, *This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations :*

13 I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

Articles of agreement among men use to be sealed.

So God, for the more abundant consolation of mankind, hath been pleased, to the gracious promises of this chapter, to add a seal, for the confirming of our faith and the encouraging of our hope. This seal is God's *bow in the cloud*. It is called a *bow* from the shape of it, being, though often less, yet never greater, than a semicircle. It is said to be God's bow, (*my bow*,) not only because he ordains it to be there, but to be there as the sign and seal of the covenant. It is said to be set in the clouds, because from thence the destroying deluge came, and therefore there (as was fit) the seal of the promise that there should not be such another deluge, was placed. I cannot but take notice how often God repeats his promise to Noah, in divers expressions to the same purpose; intimating, perhaps, the weakness of Noah's faith. As presumptuous sinners have need of line upon line for their conviction, so doubting saints have need of line upon line for their consolation; and God will give it them, rather than they shall remain in doubt. It is supposed that the rainbow was in the clouds before the flood; but it was not there as the token of the covenant till now. So baptism was in use among the Jews before the coming of Christ; but was not a seal of the covenant of grace till the Lord Jesus ordained it so to be. As the rainbow is clothed with a divine appointment, (more glorious than the fine

colours in which it is arrayed,) I can look upon it as the seal of the covenant, and rejoice in it accordingly.

14 And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud :

Such is God's way towards his people. He uses to give them the clearest evidences of his covenant relation to them, when he brings upon them a cloud of outward affliction. A child of God doth usually enjoy the sweetest comforts when he lies under the sharpest crosses. A cloud is perhaps upon the estate; a cloud upon the name; a cloud upon the health; a cloud upon the liberty; a cloud upon the religious opportunities; and then, many times, comes the rainbow; then come the most sensible consolations. *As sufferings abound, saith Paul, so our consolation also aboundeth.* 2 Cor. i. 5. The thicker the cloud, the brighter the rainbow.

15 And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

16 And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that *is* upon the earth.

17 And God said unto Noah, This *is* the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that *is* upon the earth.

God promises to remember his covenant, and to look upon the bow, that he may remember it. Not as if he needed to be put in remembrance of his promises; but it is an expression after the manner of men, much like that in Isa. xlix. 16, where, when God would assure desponding Zion that he would not forget her, he says, *Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.*

The rainbow never appears but when the clouds are more than ordinarily disposed to rain, though rain doth not always follow to us; for many times it clears up after a rainbow. It always, however, rains upon them that are directly under the cloud in which the rainbow is; for the rainbow is nothing but coloured rain. When therefore we might justly

have feared another deluge, then the rainbow, the seal of the covenant, appears.

The rainbow is never seen but when one part of the sky is clear; intimating that mercy is mixed with wrath. When the flood came, there was nothing but blackness and gloominess over the whole face of heaven; but now the scene is altered. Here is one part of the sky clear; and, lest we should fear that the cloud will overspread the whole, God puts the rainbow as a hem about the edges of it, (for the rainbow is the gilded edges of a cloud,) to keep it within compass.

The rainbow is a very glorious thing. With what curious, what lovely colours is it beautified; such as all the art of man cannot vie with. Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. Yet, how soon is it scattered and gone; and the eye that saw it, sees it no more! It is only a phantasm, and has no reality. So short, so transient, so vain, are all sublunary glories; to be fond of which is as great a piece of folly as it would be to fall in love with a gilded cloud, to be enamoured with the curious dyes of the fading rainbow.

God is said to look upon the rainbow, and to remember his covenant. Now what is the duty we are to learn from this? That we shall find by comparing two parallel passages. One is, Psa. cv. 8, *He*

hath remembered his covenant for ever ; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations. The other is, 1 Chron. xvi. 15, *Be ye mindful always of his covenant ; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations.* God remembers his covenant, and looks upon the bow that he may remember it ; therefore let us, whenever we see that bow, remember it too : remember it, 1. To be thankful to God both for the promise, and for the performance of it. The Jews, as one of their Rabbies tells us, when they see a rainbow, bless God that remembers his covenant, and is faithful to his promise. 2. To be encouraged by it in believing that God will be as good as his word, not only in this, but in all his other promises. Few that see the rainbow think of this. Christians should see written in its glorious colours those words of the apostle, *He is faithful that hath promised.* Heb. x. 23.

18 And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth : and Ham is the father of Canaan.

19 These are the three sons of Noah ; and of them was the whole earth overspread.

We have here repeated the names of the three sons of Noah, *of whom the whole earth was overspread*; by which it appears that he had no more children after the flood. All the world came of these three. Noah and his sons were in a lonely condition; they had a wide world before them, and nobody but themselves to possess and enjoy it. How sensible must they be of their late deliverance! how thankful! how fruitful! How must their hearts be enlarged in love, and praise, and obedience!

20 And Noah began *to be* an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard.

A husbandman—Heb. *a man of the earth*; that is, a man tilling the earth; as a soldier is called a man of war. We are all in one sense men of the earth: we are made of the earth, live on the earth, and are hastening to the earth again. Too many are men of the earth in another sense: they mind earthly things, Phil. iii. 19; their affections are set on things below. Col. iii. 2. See the great antiquity of the husbandman's calling. Adam and Noah, the two common fathers of mankind, were husbandmen: the one we find dressing his garden, and the other planting his vineyard. So that all other callings, how much soever admired in the world, seem to be upstarts in comparison with this. Though Noah

was the possessor of all the world, and had no one to contend with him for a foot of it, yet he did not, as too many do in the days of their advancement, quit his calling, and indulge himself in idleness. But that calling in which he was when God called him to build the ark, he did afterwards return to, and therein abide with God.

21 And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent.

There was no harm in Noah drinking of the wine; for who plants a vineyard and eats not of the fruit of it? 1 Cor. ix. 7. Wine being given to *make glad man's heart*, (Psa. civ. 15,) may doubtless be used moderately for that end. But Noah *was drunken*. He drunk to excess, and he experienced the usual effect of such excesses. Some impute this to his ignorance of the strength of the wine, and the intoxicating nature of it,—which I do not think likely. Noah had seen too many drunkards among the sinners of the old world to be ignorant of that. Others suppose that he was hot and weary with his labour; and that that occasioned his drinking too much. But the scripture takes notice of no such thing. It tells us in plain English, that Noah *drank of the*

wine, and was drunk; and doubtless this was his sin,—a very great sin; aggravated especially by this, that it was committed so soon after such a wonderful deliverance vouchsafed to him. What! Is Noah, that was so lately delivered from a deluge of water, now drowned in a deluge of wine? Yes: and the great mercy received doth render this sin committed more exceeding sinful. Hence learn,

1. The impartiality of the Scriptures. They relate the faults and failings of the best of men; and do not conceal the miscarriages of the greatest favourites of heaven; and this is an evidence that they are of God and not of man.

2. That there is no such thing as perfection in this life. The fairest copy that ever mere man wrote since the fall, has had its blots. The smoothest marble is not without its flaws. Of Noah it is expressly said, that he was *perfect in his generation*; and yet we see him drunk,—which shows that it is not meant of the absolute perfection of degrees, but of the gospel perfection of sincerity.

3. That the best of men are but men when God leaves them to themselves. Noah, that found grace in the eyes of the Lord; Noah, that was good when all the world was bad; is now wallowing in the mire of drunkenness. Noah, that kept himself sober when his neighbours were *eating and drinking*, (Matt.

xxiv. 38,) to excess, no doubt, is now himself drunk, when he is out of the way of such tempting company. May we not justly cry out with the psalmist, *Lord, what is man?* Psa. viii. 4. Should we not make this scripture an admonition to ourselves, that he that thinks he stands, may take heed lest he fall? 1 Cor. x. 12. Nay, that he that has stood in the midst of temptations, by being watchful, may take heed lest he fall when he is out of temptation, by being off his watch?

This fall of Noah's might prove a happy means of keeping him humble, and low in his own eyes; and was perhaps permitted for that end. Noah, it may be, might sometimes be lifted up with the consideration of his upright walking in the old world; and might begin to please and pride himself in reflecting upon his own singular piety,—in thinking of such a temptation resisted at such a time,—of the solicitations of such a company of sinners overcome. And perhaps the glory of this was not ascribed so entirely as it should have been to divine grace. Then comes this failing, to convince him that whilst he stood, he did not stand upon his own legs, but leaned upon the free grace of God; which did for this time withdraw its wonted assistance, and then Noah's hair is cut, his strength is gone, and when he goes forth, he finds by experience that without

divine aid he is but as other men; and that would teach him to sing to the tune of *Psa. cxv. 1: Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name be the praise.*

Well, Noah was drunk; and what was the consequence? Why *he was uncovered within his tent.* Drunkenness is a sin that doth uncover people. If men have infirmities, they are sure to betray them when they are in drink. When the wine's in, the wit's out; and then the secrets are out. Had I a mind to unlock the closet of a man's breast, a bottle of wine should be the key. *Quod in corde sobrii, id in lingua ebrii.* Drunken porters keep open gates. How often do men do that when they are drunk, which, when they are sober, they would blush even at the thought of. Drunkenness is a shameful sin; and, upon that account, is its own punishment.

22 And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without.

Thus to have abused any one would not have been consistent with that honour which we owe to all men, 1 Pet. ii. 17; but would have directly thwarted that golden rule, *to speak evil of no man.* Tit. iii. 2. But to act thus towards a father was a notori-

ous infringing of that honour and respect which the laws of God, and of nature, require children to give to their parents, there being no relation that calls for respect so deeply rooted and so extensive as that of a father. As we are not to entertain in our own hearts, so we are to be very careful that we do nothing to beget in others, a base and low esteem of a brother,—much less of a superior. God took special care that even in the punishment of malefactors, nothing should be done to make our brother seem vile. Deut. xxv. 3. What wickedness was it then in Ham thus to make his aged father seem vile. Children's honour and reverence of their parents is the leading duty, the foundation of all the rest; and, therefore, if you pluck out that stone, as Ham did here, the whole building totters. It was not enough for him to despise his father himself, but he must do what he can to make his brethren do so too. What a great deal of wickedness might have been the fruit of this, if Shem and Japheth had been as tinder and touchwood to the spark of temptation which Ham brought. If they had insulted their father as he did, what a door had been opened for disobedience and rebellion to come in at!

23 And Shem and Japheth took a

garment, and laid *it* upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces *were* backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness.

Shem and Japheth had learned their duty as children better than Ham. They were sorrowful, no doubt, for the sin both of their father and their brother. When any thing is said to us tending to the disgrace or disparagement of another, especially of a father, natural, civil, or ecclesiastical; a father in age, or a father in office; it is not enough that we do not join with them that tell us, and triumph as they do; but we must hear it (as Shem and Japheth heard this report of Ham's) with trouble in our hearts and displeasure in our very looks. Prov. xxv. 23. We must do what we can to conceal that which doth tend to the person's disgrace. It is not enough that we do not, with Ham, proclaim,—but we must, with Shem and Japheth,—study to hide, the faults and infirmities of others. I know no garment that will serve to do this, but the garment of brotherly love and Christian charity. *Love*, saith the apostle, *shall cover the multitude of sins*; 1 Pet. iv. 8; which I think is meant of this kind of covering. He that loves his brother, loves his good

name; and will therefore be fearful of doing any thing which may be a reproach to it. Children should be very careful not to proclaim their parents' infirmities. If the eye, much more the tongue, that mocketh his father, shall be plucked out. Prov. xxx. 17. Besides the mantle of love, which is to be thrown over the faults of all, there is a robe of reverence to be cast over the failings of superiors. The emperor Constantine did not think the imperial purple too precious to make a veil to cover the infirmities of his bishops.

24 And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him.

25 And he said, Cursed *be* Canaan ; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.

Sleep is the common cure of drunkenness. Those that lie down in drink use to awake sober. But Noah, I suppose, did so awake from his wine as never thus to fall asleep again. Let them that sleep with Noah awake with Noah.

What Noah said hereupon, was by a spirit of prophecy. He told his sons (as Jacob his, Gen. xlix. 1) what should befall them in the latter days. Jacob,

in blessing Joseph's sons, is said to bless Joseph. Gen. xlviii. 15, 16. So Noah here, in cursing Canaan the son, did in effect curse Ham the father. Here the iniquity of the father was visited upon the son. Probably Canaan was wicked like Ham. And no marvel that the children's teeth are set on edge, when they eat of the same sour grapes of sin that their fathers ate of before them. Ezek. xviii. 2. The curse of Canaan was a curse to Ham; for usually when the children are made to suffer for their fathers' sins, the fathers are made to smart in the children's sufferings. And though Ham and all his posterity might be cursed, yet Moses mentions Canaan only; to comfort the people of Israel, that were going to possess the land of Canaan. He shows that the inhabitants of it were a cursed people, that the Israelites might invade them with more courage, having this curse, as old as Noah, to fight for them; which might stand them in no small stead, considering that Noah's curse was God's curse; and that those whom God curses, are cursed indeed.

This curse was a curse of slavery. He that serves a prince may be a gentleman; but he that serves a servant is a very slave. We never find this curse fulfilled until the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites, above eight hundred years after this. So long the curse lay dormant, and never began to work;

and during all that time, the Canaanites were flourishing nations,—so far from being servants of servants, that they were even rulers of rulers. Were they not so when Adoni-bezek, a Canaanite prince, had threescore and ten kings at his feet, fed with the crumbs that fell from his table? Yet all this while the Canaanites were under the curse, and that a curse of slavery. By which it appears that a nation, a family, a person, may lie under the curse of God, and yet enjoy outward prosperity. The curse doth not always work presently; there may be a curse entailed, where there are no visible effects appearing; but they will appear at last. This curse did come, (for it was not a curse causeless,) when the Gibeonites were enslaved, Josh. ix. 23; and also the rest of the Canaanites that were not destroyed. Judg. i. 28, 30, 33, 35. Divine curses, though they often work slowly, yet always work surely.

26 And he said, Blessed *be* the LORD God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.

Noah doth not directly bless Shem, but his God. To him the praise and glory of all that is well done, both by ourselves and others, should be ascribed. When the light of others shines before us, and we see their good works, we should glorify, not them,

but our Father which is in heaven, who works in them. Matt. v. 16. Phil. ii. 15. That blessing of David's when Abigail came forth to meet him, seems parallel with this of Noah: *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me.* 1 Sam. xxv. 32, 33. We rob God of his glory when we say, "blessed be the instrument," instead of saying, "blessed be the gracious Hand that moved it." Though means and second causes must have their due praise, yet the great First Cause must always have the principal glory. Wicked Canaan is cursed in his own person; for our wickedness is of ourselves, and there is nothing that we can so truly call our own, as our sins. But pious Shem is blessed in God, the first mover and chief agent in what he did. We must learn to look beyond instruments, to God; as in our expectations of mercy, so in our thankfulness for mercy.

Taking this as looking forward, (for so it certainly doth,) it seems to be a prophecy of the continuance of the church of God in the posterity of Shem; for it was from Shem that the people of the Jews came, who were at length the only professing people that God had in the world. This is hinted in the words, *the Lord God of Shem*; for though he be in a sense the Lord God of all the world, yet he is in a more peculiar manner the Lord God of his church.

And it is in his church only that he is blessed ; for though all his works do *praise* him, yet his saints only do *bless* him. Psa. cxlv. 10. What greater blessing could be entailed upon Shem's posterity than this,—that among them God should be known and owned, professed and praised? And for Shem himself, was it not blessing enough to call God his God? His, after a peculiar manner; his, in a covenant way; his God, to love him, and own him, and save him? *Happy is the people that are in such a case; yea, happy, thrice happy, is that people, that person, whose God is the Lord.* Psa. cxliv. 15.

And Canaan shall be his servant. This, that was part of Canaan's curse, is part of Shem's blessing. The subduing of the church's enemies, though it be a curse to them, is a blessing to the church. If God be Shem's God, Canaan his enemy, will quickly be his servant; for *if God be for us, who can be against us?* Rom. viii. 31.

27 God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.

Japheth's blessing comes last, though it is supposed that he was the eldest son of Noah.

God shall enlarge Japheth. So he did won-

derfully. Japheth had the most numerous progeny, and therefore, as it was fit, the largest possessions. His posterity did people a considerable part of the world;—all Europe, a great part of Asia, and perhaps America; his demesne was from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. God is to have the glory of all our enlargements. Are our hearts enlarged to run the way of his commandments? 'Tis his Spirit that enlarges them. *Psa. cxix. 32.* Have we been in straits of affliction, and are we enlarged by deliverance? It is the hand of God that sets our feet in a large room. *Psa. xxxi. 8.* Is the estate enlarged,—the trade enlarged? 'Tis the divine providence that works those enlargements. It is an extraordinary word that is here used for *enlarge*: *Japht*, plainly alluding to Japheth's name; for the sake of which allusion, doubtless the word was chosen.

Some read it, *God shall persuade Japheth*; that is, he will bring the Gentiles into the fold of the gospel church. The Gentile world (Japheth's descendants) were for a long time strangers to the covenant of promise,—aliens to the commonwealth of Israel,—had no ordinances, no means of grace,—but were firmly wedded to idolatrous delusions. Now who shall persuade them to leave those dangerous courses which in the days of their ignorance

they walked in? Who shall entice them into the gospel fold? Why God himself hath undertaken to do so: he has done it in a great measure; and will do it yet more and more, by the power of his Spirit working with the preaching of the gospel. God *shall persuade—blande reducet*; he shall bring him back in a gentle way. The Gentiles were not brought into the church by force of arms; the gospel of Christ was never carried, like the Alcoran, upon the sword's point. The work of conversion is wrought in a persuading way. God drives none to the church,—to heaven, against their wills; but draws with the cords of a man, and with bands of love. Hos. xi. 4. The main thing the Spirit hath to do, is to work upon the will, persuading and also enabling us to embrace Jesus Christ. It is God only that can effectually persuade a sinner to accept of Christ. Ministers are employed, indeed, in persuading work; but, alas, they can do no more than Elisha's staff upon the face of the dead child. Elisha must come himself, or the work will not be accomplished. 2 Kings iv. 31—34. If the gospel of Christ were separate from the power of God, it would never be made effectual to salvation. Rom. i. 16. 1 Cor. i. 18.

And he shall dwell in the tents of Shem.
This may refer either,

1. To the continuance of the church in the posterity of Shem. If the church be in the tents of Shem, God dwells in them; for where the church is, God is. Those that would have God to dwell in their house, must be careful to keep up a church in their house. The church did all along to the coming of Christ continue in the tents of Shem; that is, in the nation and people of the Jews, who were his posterity. In Judah only was God known; his name was great only in Israel. *Psa. lxxvi. 1.* God is often said to dwell amongst the Jews. *Exod. xxv. 8. Deut. xii. 11.* They had the Shecinah, (which comes from the word here used, *ve-yishkon*,) the signs and tokens of God's special care and peculiar presence, between the cherubims. *Num. vii. 89.*

In the tents;—perhaps referring to the tent or tabernacle in which God did dwell among the Jews; possession of which he solemnly took. *Exod. xl. 34, 35.* Observe, the church of God dwells not in the palaces and royal houses,—not in the castles and walled towns of Shem,—but in the tents of Shem; which denote both meanness and movableness. It is usually the lot of the church to dwell in tents, in *mean* places; for God hath called the poor of this world. In *movable* places; for it was never yet tied to any people, having here no continuing city.

And he shall, may be read, *but he shall.* God

shall enlarge Japheth as to the things of this life; but in spiritual things Shem shall have the pre-eminence. Japheth shall have the larger portion, but Shem shall have the sweeter. Japheth shall have the fatness of the earth, but Shem shall have the dew of heaven. And those that have ever known the comfort and tasted the sweetness of the Divine presence, will prefer Shem's despicable tents, with God dwelling in them, far before all Japheth's enlargements among the Isles of the Gentiles. It is better to dwell in tents with God, than in palaces without him. England with the gospel, is richer than both the Indies with all their gold. Or,

2. To the coming of Christ, as the descendant of Shem. Some understand this as a prophecy of the incarnation of the Son of God, whose day Noah doubtless saw, as well as Abraham, though at a distance; there being the great gulf of about two thousand years fixed between him and it. This may be looked upon as one of those sundry times at which God spake unto the fathers concerning Christ. Heb. i. 1. It had been already revealed that he should be the seed of the woman: that cuts off the angels. And now it is further revealed that he should be of the posterity of Shem: that cuts off Ham and Japheth. *The Word was made flesh*; John i. 14: there's Christ the seed of the woman.

And dwelt among us, us Jews: there's Christ in the tents of Shem. *Eskenosen*, which is of the same signification with and perhaps is derived from the word *shakan*, here used. He *tabernacled* among us; noting the meanness of his appearance, and the shortness of his stay.

28 And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years.

29 And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years: and he died.

Noah lived nine hundred and fifty years; longer by twenty years than Adam, and but nineteen short of Methuselah. None of his descendants attained such an age. This long life in the land which the Lord his God gave him, was the special reward of his signal piety. He lived to see pride lift up its head in the tower of Babel; to see the foundations of idolatry and oppression laid in Nimrod's monarchy. He lived to see, with a sad heart no doubt, a degenerate offspring, whose sins dared heaven itself, and cried aloud for vengeance. But though he lived long, he died at last. Neither his piety towards God, nor God's favour to him; neither his honour, nor his power, nor his wealth, could excuse him from going the way of all the earth.

And now we take leave of Noah, whose memory, (while Heathens, strangers to the true God, idolatrously worshipped him in their god Saturn, and perhaps in their god Janus,) we that know the Scriptures, do reverence; esteeming him a patriarch indeed, a pattern of piety, a favourite of heaven; one who, having seen many changes in a troublesome world, exchanged it at last for a better place, in a happier state; a state of rest, (according to his name,) even that everlasting rest which remaineth for the people of God. Heb. iv. 9.

CHAPTER X.

This chapter, though it be a very difficult one, and puzzles not only a common reader with the hard words that are in it, but the best interpreters with the hard things that are in it, yet is a most excellent comment on two passages in the foregoing chapter concerning the sons of Noah. I. What was said to them: Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth; and II. What was said of them: Of them was the whole earth overspread.

NOW these are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth: and unto them were sons born after the flood.

Much pains some learned men have taken to find out what particular nations came from the particular persons named in this chapter; but there appears to be no certainty as to most of them. It may not be amiss to enquire a little into the reasons

of that uncertainty; whence it is that we are so much in the dark concerning the original of nations; there being no nation that I know of, extant under the sun, except that of the Jews, the origin of which can be confidently fixed. Five reasons may be assigned for this: 1. Distance of time; the footsteps of the greatest events, how deeply soever impressed, being easily trodden out by the feet of time. 2. The pride and ambition of many nations, who, scorning to stand upon the same level with their neighbours, sought to beget in men a belief of their self-origination, or perhaps of their divine extraction; in order to which it was necessary to rase out all traditions and records of any other original. If the Arcadians would assume the title of *Proselenoi*, and call themselves more ancient than the moon, they must necessarily renounce all alliance to Japheth or any of his sons. 3. The want of timely records among the nations, in which to preserve an account of their rise and beginning. For a long time, probably, nothing was delivered but by oral tradition; which must needs be uncertain, especially among the first planters of nations, who, when they came into a desolate place, (as every part of the world was after the flood,) found it enough to teach their children how to cultivate the earth, without teaching them their pedigree. So,

for want of leisure and opportunity, they suffered the certain histories of their own former state to dwindle into fabulous stories; and were, at length, able to give no better an account of themselves than that they sprung out of the earth upon which they lived. 4. The great disorders and confusions that have prevailed in nations. War hath driven many people out of their first habitations, whilst other nations have taken possession of them by dint of the sword, and so both have been mixed together. 5. The change and corruption of names; which, partly by the confusion of Babel, partly by the carelessness of people, and partly by the lapse of time, have been either totally lost, or so sadly mangled, that it has been scarcely possible to know them again. So that, all things considered, it is vain to expect to find either the known names of nations, among the names of this chapter, or the names of this chapter among the known names of nations, any further than we have the light of other scriptures to direct us. And it is plain that the Holy Ghost doth here take most especial notice of those countries and people with which the nation of the Jews had most dealing, and which were therefore to be mentioned in the subsequent histories of the Scripture.

2 The sons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and

Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras.

3 And the sons of Gomer; Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah.

4 And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim.

5 By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations.

The posterity of Japheth peopled *the isles of the Gentiles* after the confusion of Babel; for from thence they were scattered. By *the isles of the Gentiles* are commonly understood the countries of Europe and of the north of Asia. Europe is almost surrounded with water, and contains an abundance of islands. The Jews, to whom chiefly respect was had by Moses in writing this history, did call all those places *isles* to which they went by sea out of Judea. Isa. xi. 11. Zeph. ii. 11. Hence *the Isles* are defined by the prophet to be places *beyond the sea*. Jer. xxv. 22. In this sense Greece and Italy were islands. Among these *isles of the Gentiles*, our British Isles are justly reckoned; and were therefore doubtless peopled by Japheth's posterity,—but by which it is hard to say. Mr. Camden is pleased to make the Britons the descendants of Gomer. Sir Walter

Raleigh seats Gomer in the borders of Syria and Cilicia, and conducts his warlike issue into Germany and France. The best of it is, that the matter is not great. If we are born of God, by faith in Jesus Christ, we need not be much concerned whether we are descended from Gomer or not.

6 And the sons of Ham ; Cush, and Mizraim, and Phut, and Canaan.

7 And the sons of Cush ; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah, and Sabtechah : and the sons of Raamah ; Sheba, and Dedan.

8 And Cush begat Nimrod : he began to be a mighty one in the earth.

9 He was a mighty hunter before the Lorp : wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD.

10 And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.

11 Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah,

12 And Resen between Nineveh and Calah : the same is a great city.

13 And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Ananim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim.

14 And Pathrusim, and Casluhim, (out of whom came Philistim,) and Caphtorim.

From Cush, the eldest son of Ham, came the inhabitants of Arabia, and perhaps also of Ethiopia, by which name *Cush* is usually, but not always truly, translated. Num. xii. 1. Ezek. xxix. 10. xxx. 9. Isa. xviii. 1. 2 Chron. xxi. 16. From Mizraim, the second son of Ham, 'tis certain the Egyptians came. The name *Mizraim* is the Hebrew name for *Egypt*, and Egypt is called *the land of Ham*, Psa. cv. 23, 27; that is, the land which Mizraim, the son of Ham, did people. Concerning Nimrod, the son of Cush and the grandson of Ham, three things are here said:—

1. That *he began to be a mighty one in the earth*; that is, he was the first that did affect and assume to himself a royal power and authority over the rest of mankind. He was *mighty* no doubt, in body; of giant-like proportions, and more than ordinary strength, by which means he got to be *mighty* in

wealth, honour, and authority; and is commonly reputed to have founded the Assyrian monarchy, which is reckoned to have lasted about one thousand six hundred years, and to have ended in Belshazzar, who was slain by Cyrus. Dan. v.

2. That *he was a mighty hunter before the Lord*; perhaps a hunter of men, to spoil and destroy them. This is a metaphor frequent in Scripture. Mic. vii. 2. Jer. xvi. 16. Lam. iv. 18. The authority he had was unto him an occasion of sin. His violence and oppression were the offspring of his abused power. This power, that was given for edification, proves often for destruction. Or it may perhaps mean that Nimrod was a hunter of wild beasts. I suppose he was the first of the trade, and I do not remember that any good man (in Scripture) followed him in it. This hunting was probably the stirrup by which he got into the saddle of power; the way that he took to gratify his pride, and to bring about his ambitious designs; for no doubt he was (like profane Esau, his successor in the trade) *a cunning hunter*. Gen. xxv. 27. By hunting and killing wild beasts, with which the country did swarm, he won the love of the people, and got to be their ruler; laying the foundation of his tyranny in outward expressions of kindness. And what is more ordinary with ambitious spirits, than thus to court the shadow of popular applause, whilst

they covet the troublesome honour of sovereignty? He that undertakes to tame a beast, forgets not to feed him with his own hand. Such was the policy of this mighty hunter, of whom Absalom also learnt the knack. 2 Sam. xv. 5. Those that would not be led, Nimrod would drive into subjection; those that could not be prevailed on by his pretended kindnesses to love him, he brought by his real violence to fear him. The maxim of his government was perhaps that of Caligula: *oderint dum metuant*. A bloody sword is the usual harbinger of a usurped sceptre.

Before the Lord. I understand this in a bad sense; and the rather because I find no footsteps of the true religion in the Assyrian empire. Agreeably to this interpretation is Malvenda's exposition: *ipse profanavit ad esse prævalidus in terra*;—*he profaned (religion) to make himself mighty in the earth.* Mighty hunters before (that is, against) the Lord, will prove too weak to stand before the Almighty; for who ever hardened his heart against God and prospered? Never any one yet. To those that hunt their prey like lions, God will be *as a lion, and as a young lion*: *he will tear and go away; he will take away, and none shall rescue.* Hos. v. 14.

Observe how God crossed Nimrod in his ambitious

designs. The thing he aimed at, was a name in the world; and he had it for a time, while he lived; but after he was gone, that scripture was fulfilled in him, —*the name of the wicked shall rot.* Prov. x. 7. God turned his name into a proverb, and he became a by-word among the nations. He would fain be famous,—but God made him infamous; a name he had, but not a good name; for a good name is a name for good things, with good people; and that Nimrod had not, being blessed only by those who *bless the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth.* Psa. x. 3.

3. That *the beginning of his kingdom was Babel.* A kingdom was the thing that he was ambitious of, and he had it. Perhaps the crown was fairly placed upon his head by the hands of the people, to prevent a second deluge of confusion and disorder. People without government, are like fishes in the sea, where the greater devour the less. “It is probable,” saith Dr. Stillingfleet, “that after the death of the first leaders of the several colonies, who, ’tis likely, had superiority over all that went with them, and perhaps continued it while they lived, the people, by reason of their poverty and dispersedness of habitations, did not incorporate generally into any civil government, but rulers arose gradually, by the great oppressing the poor, and contending one with another. They who got the better over their adversaries, took still greater au-

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thority into their hands. At first, almost every city and adjacent territory had a king over it, who, by conflicting with each other, at last brought several cities and territories under the rule of one person." Orig. Sacr. lib. 1. cap. 1. s. 16, 17. Thus doth this learned writer trace the origin of monarchy; so far is it from an absolute *jus divinum*. 'Twas a bad omen, that monarchy, the most orderly of governments, should begin at Babel, a place that had its name from confusion.

Nimrod built four cities; none of which proved famous in after ages, but Nineveh; which became the royal seat of the Assyrian monarchs, and was celebrated for its greatness. Jon. iii. 3.

Such is all we know for certain concerning Nimrod,—the Holy Ghost passing over the rest of his exploits in silence, and burying them in oblivion. A busy man in the world, 'tis clear he was; did much; got much; but all his doings, and all his gettings, could not secure him from the stroke of death,—perhaps a violent death; for

*Ad generum Cereris sine cæde et vulnere, pauci
Descendunt reges, et siccâ morte, tyranni.*—Juv.

He went down to the pit, though he was the terror
of the mighty in the land of the living. Ezek. xxxii.
25, 27.

15 And Canaan begat Sidon his firstborn, and Heth,

16 And the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Girgasite,

17 And the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite,

18 And the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite ; and afterward were the families of the Canaanites spread abroad.

It may be asked, if God's blessing of Noah and his sons was *be fruitful and multiply*, how comes cursed Canaan to have so great a share in it ? I answer, divine curses do always work surely, but they do not always work visibly, nor always presently. A person, a family, a nation, may lie under the curse of God, and yet may thrive and prosper in the world. We are apt to think that every cursed person must die the death of Nadab and Abihu, by fire from heaven ;—that every cursed family must go down, with Dathan and Abiram, quick into hell ;—that every cursed place must undergo the fate of Sodom. No : there are other ways in which the curse of God works, and which do not make such a noise in the world. Canaan hath many children, but perhaps he hath a

blinded mind, a hardened heart, a seared conscience. His children have large and fruitful possessions, but they are given up ~~unto~~ *to their own hearts' lust*, to walk ~~in their own counsels~~. Psa. lxxxi. 12. The bridle of restraining grace being removed, they are defiled with all manner of abominations. Lev. xviii. 27. The curse may for a while look like the drunkard's wine *when it giveth his colour in the cup*, smiling upon the sinner as if there were no danger; but *at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder*. Prov. xxiii. 31, 32. Psa. lxxiii. 12, 18, 19.

19 And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou comest to Gerrar, unto Gaza; as thou goest, unto Sodom, and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboim, even unto Lasha.

20 These *are* the sons of Ham, after their families, after their tongues, in their countries, *and* in their nations.

The boundaries of the land of the Canaanites are here exactly described: the western border from north to south, is from Sidon to Gaza; and the eastern border from south to north, is from Gaza by Sodom to Lasha. And wherefore is this? Why is

the sacred writer so particular in his account of the land possessed by the Canaanites,—that despicable race, while he is seemingly so careless about other great and mighty nations? Certainly the reason is, because the children of Israel were to be so much concerned with them. Canaan's land was to be the Holy Land; and we are, therefore, told the exact bounds and limits of it. 'Twas for the Jews primarily that all the Old Testament was written. 'Twas concerning the Jews and their affairs that most of it was written, and other nations are mentioned only as they had relation to, and correspondence with, the nation of the Jews. God did place the Canaanites, that cursed race, in the land which is here described, because he intended that land for his own people, who as yet were not ready for it. Who then must keep possession? None were so fit as those devoted nations; because whoever should be possessed of that country, must at length be dispossessed. Pertinent hereunto is that passage of the dying song of Moses: *When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel*; Deut. xxxii. 8; that is, he allotted just so much land to the Canaanites as upon the casting out of them, would be a sufficient portion for the children of Israel. This

gracious care of God for his people, is mentioned the first of those many mercies that he bestowed upon them for exciting them to thankfulness and obedience.

21 Unto Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth the elder, even to him were *children* born.

22 The children of Shem ; Elam, and Asshur, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and Aram.

23 And the children of Aram ; Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Mash.

24 And Arphaxad begat Salah ; and Salah begat Eber.

25 And unto Eber were born two sons : the name of one *was* Peleg ; for in his days was the earth divided ; and his brother's name *was* Joktan.

26 And Joktan begat Almodad, and Sheleph, and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah,

27 And Hadoram, and Uzal, and Diklah,

28 And Obal, and Abimael, and Sheba,

29 And Ophir, and Havilah, and Jobab : all these *were* the sons of Joktan.

30 And their dwelling was from Mesha, as thou goest, unto Sephar a mount of the east.

31 These *are* the sons of Shem, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations.

32 These *are* the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations : and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood.

The distinguishing title added to the name of Shem sounds somewhat oddly; *the father of all the children of Eber*. Why is Shem said to be the father of all the children of Eber rather than of all Arphaxad's, or Salah's, or Peleg's? Because from Eber the nation of the Jews descended. Abraham is styled *the Hebrew*, Gen. xiv. 13. So that when it is said that Shem was the father of all the children of Eber, it is meant that he was the father of God's professing people; and Moses mentions this as an honour to him. There were many other things that made Shem honourable, which another would have

taken notice of rather than this;—as the length of his life, his knowledge and wisdom, his salvation in the ark, his numerous issue, and the many kings who descended from him. But Moses thought it enough to say of Shem, that he was the father of the Hebrews,—though they were then bond-slaves in Egypt, a low, despised people, and counted as the off-scouring of all things;—because they were God's people, and therefore it was an honour to Shem to be the father of them. 'Tis true honour to be related to the church of God. Jacob, who begat twelve patriarchs, was more honourable than Ishmael, who begat twelve princes. A family of saints is to be preferred before a family of nobles.

CHAPTER XI.

The old distinction between the sons of God and the sons of men, professors and profane, was laid upon so lasting a foundation that the waters of the flood,—which overturned most other distinctions,—could not blot out this. As it appeared when men began to multiply in the old world, so after the like multiplication in the new world, the same distinction arose. The sons of God did soon embody and constitute a church for God, and the sons of men did soon unite and fill a profane and careless world. In this chapter something is said, I. Of the dispersion of the sons of men; II. Of the pedigree of the sons of God.

AND the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.

2 And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there.

3 And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.

4 And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top *may reach* unto heaven ; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

How many have been put upon great, and troublesome, and chargeable, and sometimes very dangerous undertakings, merely by the working of a proud, ambitious, vain-glorious spirit! Many an estate has been spent, many a family ruined, many a life lost, many a soul damned for ever, by an inordinate desire of fame and reputation, and a name in the world. So strangely fond have some been of that shadow, as to prefer it before all other enjoyments whatsoever. A name purchased with the very heart's blood has been thought cheap. So great a vanity is there bound up in the hearts of men. That which was the design of these men in building this great tower, was the design of one in burning a much more stately edifice ;—of him who set fire to the temple of Diana at Ephesus, with no other aim

but that he might be talked of. And both he and these Babel-builders had their end;—being represented in the records of fame as proud, ambitious fools. Philo Judæus saith that every one wrote his name upon a brick, thus calling their bricks (as the worldlings their lands, Psa. xlix. 11) by their own names.

Lest we be scattered. How unanimous were these sons of men! how were they afraid, not only of enmity one against another, but of strangeness one to another! Thus are the children of this world wiser in their generation than the children of light. The builders of Babel can join hands and hearts in building a monument of iniquity, when the builders of Sion cannot be unanimous in rearing a church for God. Satan is not divided against Satan: yet are Christians divided against Christians. *Pudet hæc opprobia nobis.*

5 And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded.

6 And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from

them, which they have imagined to do.

The disappointment of the design of these builders was signal, and is an eminent proof of that saying of Solomon: *there are many devices in a man's heart, nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand.* Prov. xix. 21. The counsel of the Lord was, that the sons of men should be scattered abroad to replenish the earth; their device was, to build a tower that they might not be scattered. Let men devise what devices they will, *the counsel of the Lord standeth for ever; the thoughts of his heart to all generations.* Psa. xxxiii. 11.

The Lord came down to see the city and the tower. This is an expression after the manner of men, and notes only that God did know and understand their design. He cannot properly be said to *come down to see*; for *all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.* Heb. iv. 13. God did not come as a stranger merely to see the building, but as a judge to reckon with the builders. 'Twas one of the startling challenges which the Lord made to Job out of the whirlwind, *behold every one that is proud, and abase him.* Job xl. 11. This is the prerogative of the Most High, and passes the skill of those that have not *an arm like God*, and cannot *thunder with a voice like him.* Job xl. 9.

Behold, the people is one. I cannot but think that some petty contentions and animosities happened now and then among these Babel-builders; perhaps about the manner and method of their working. Yet I find no law made that they that did not lay every brick in all points according to the act of uniformity, should not work at all. O that Christians would learn this wisdom; for *fas est ab hoste doceri*. We should be willing to sacrifice private fancies to public interests; and not thrust all those from the work that are not free to work just in our way. Those that contend hotly for a ceremony, I doubt will contend but coldly for the faith; and then in comes the common enemy. We can never hope to see the building of the gospel Jerusalem go on, while the builders are throwing the bricks at one another's heads, and knocking the trowels out of one another's hands. If that had been the way at the building of Babel, there would have been no need to have confounded the languages: the work would soon have stood still of itself.

But if the people were *one* in the building of Babel, then I doubt Cardinal Bellarmin was mistaken when, in his enquiry after the true church, he makes this same *unity* to be one of the infallible marks of it. *Unio membrorum inter se*, is his seventh note. But if that be so, these Babel-builders may put in

their claim. The Church of Rome boasts much of her unity; but it is one mark of the antichristian system: *these have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.* Rev. xvii. 13. What Paul saith of zeal, (Gal. iv. 18,) may be truly said of unity: It is good to be unanimous always *in a good thing*. But when I see people *one* in building Babel, and *of one mind* in their submission to the beast, though I may commend their policy, I must condemn their design.

They have all one language. Unity in affection is a happiness; but when there is also a unity in expression, the happiness is double. Gospel work will go on apace when God gives, not only one mind, but one mouth; Rom. xv. 6; when we can agree, not only to think alike, but to speak alike. *Alas! who shall live when God doeth this?* Num. xxiv. 23.

Nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do. They were a stubborn generation, impatient of restraint, children of Belial. The character which Aaron gave the people of Israel agrees with that of these people: they were *set on mischief*. Exod. xxxii. 22. Ever since our father Adam would not be restrained from eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, all his children have been fond of forbidden fruit; and the

restraints of the divine law have been like water to unslaked lime,—so much the more inflaming. So exceeding sinful is sin as to *take occasion by the commandment* to work in the soul *all manner of concupiscence*. Rom. vii. 8.

Gens humana ruit per vetitum nefas.—HOR.

If the children of men have imagined to build a Babel, God himself shall not prevent them. The banks of a command to the contrary rather make the flood of corrupt nature to swell the higher.

7 Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.

God speaks not here to the angels, as some understand, for he was not one of them, neither had he any need of their advice or assistance,—they being creatures and he their Creator. But the Father speaks to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. 'Tis an expression like that in chap. i. 26, *let us make man*; and is an excellent proof of the trinity of persons in the unity of the Godhead. They said, *go to, let us build*; thus exciting one another to this rebellious attempt; and now God saith, *go to, let us confound their language*. If men will stir up themselves to sin, God will stir up himself to punish; for as he

doth stir up his strength to come and save his people, (Psa. lxxx. 2,) so doth he also stir up his strength to come and destroy his enemies.

One would have thought God would have said, let us go down and consume them in a moment. No : though justice might speak such severe language, yet in the midst of wrath, mercy was remembered. That which was done, was rather to prevent their going further in this attempt, than to punish them for having gone so far. Their sentence is only that their language should be confounded, that they may not understand one another's speech, and so be unable to continue their proceeding.

8 So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth : and they left off to build the city.

9 Therefore is the name of it called Babel ; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth : and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

Whereas they all before spoke and understood the same language, they are by a miracle made to for-

get their former tongue, and to speak and understand some other only. So that all the original languages that are now in the world,—and perhaps some that are extinct,—had their rise from this confusion. There are many derivative languages, as French, Spanish, Italian, English, &c., which have risen from the mixtures and corruptions of other tongues. Indeed, all languages are subject to continual changes and alterations, which is perhaps the effect of this curse. Some have thought it desirable that there should be a universal language, and in order thereunto, a universal character, and have attempted something towards it; but that looks like Cain's building a city, when God had condemned him to be a vagabond; it is thwarting a divine curse, and therefore the attempt will prove ineffectual. But in heaven, where *there shall be no more curse*, (Rev. xxii. 3,) the saints shall speak one language, and with one mind and one mouth glorify God.

They left off to build. God can easily cross the likeliest attempts, and blast the fairest designs of wicked men. *Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when God commandeth not?* Lam. iii. 37. How many Ahitophels has infinite wisdom befooled! how many Goliaths has infinite power overturned! and how many Hamans has infinite justice hanged upon the gallows that they had reared for his people!

There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord. Prov. xxi. 30.

From thence did the Lord scatter them abroad. Their main end in building this tower was to prevent their dispersion, and behold the thing that they were afraid of is come upon them. That dispersion which they thought by their rebellion to evade, they did by their rebellion bring upon themselves. To seek to avoid any trouble by unlawful means, is one ready way to fall into it.

The hand of God is to be acknowledged in all our scatterings. Is the family scattered, are relations scattered, friends and acquaintances scattered, Christian societies scattered? God is the author of such scatterings; for this evil, as well as other evil, is not in a city but the Lord hath done it. Amos iii. 6.

And now we take our leave of the sons of men, the estranged Gentile world, being to hear no more of them in all the book of God, to the best of my remembrance, any further than either the church of God in general, or some of his people in particular, are concerned with them. What care has the householder for his lumber, in comparison with his jewels, unless his jewels chance to fall among it? *The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth; but it is to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.*

2 Chron. xvi. 9. God is pleased to give us an account of Abraham's servants, Isaac's wells, and Jacob's sheep, whilst we are not told a word of the thirty-one dynasties of the Egyptian kings, of the mighty monarchs of Babel, or of the other renowned kingdoms of the earth ; for *the Lord's portion is his people ; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.* Deut. xxxii. 9.,

10 These *are* the generations of Shem : Shem *was* an hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after the flood :

11 And Shem lived after he begat Arphaxad five hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.

12 And Arphaxad lived five and thirty years, and begat Salah :

13 And Arphaxad lived after he begat Salah four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters.

14 And Salah lived thirty years, and begat Eber :

15 And Salah lived after he begat Eber four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters.

16 And Eber lived four and thirty years, and begat Peleg :

17 And Eber lived after he begat Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters.

18 And Peleg lived thirty years, and begat Reu :

19 And Peleg lived after he begat Reu two hundred and nine years, and begat sons and daughters.

20 And Reu lived two and thirty years, and begat Serug :

21 And Reu lived after he begat Serug two hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters.

22 And Serug lived thirty years, and begat Nahor :

23 And Serug lived after he begat Nahor two hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.

24 And Nahor lived nine and twenty years, and begat Terah :

25 And Nahor lived after he begat Terah an hundred and nineteen years,

and begat sons and daughters.

26 And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

We have here an account of the pedigree of the sons of God, from Shem to Abraham, for ten generations; just as many as were before the flood from Adam to Noah. Gen. v. But the account is here, as it was there, very brief and succinct; the sacred writer seeming as if he were hastening on towards the history of Abraham, the father of the faithful. 'Tis however observable what a manifest decrease there is in the years of their lives; all of them falling far short of the years of the antediluvian patriarchs. The days of the years of their pilgrimage began now to be few as well as evil; and did not attain unto the days of the years of the lives of their fathers in their pilgrimage. Gen. xlvii. 9. It seems that as iniquity did abound, life did shorten; and Moses fixes the term of man's life at about the one half of Nahor's age,—threescore years and ten, where it still abides; and to which, with much ado, scarcely one in a hundred reaches. The wages of sin being death, when men are so busy about the work, 'tis no wonder if the wages be soon paid.

This genealogy terminates in Abraham, because his genealogy was also that of Christ, who was not

only the son of David, but also the son of Abraham; and it is with Abraham that Matthew resumes the pedigree of the Saviour. Matt. i. 1. So that in Gen. v., Gen. xi., and Matt. i., we have the entire genealogy of Jesus Christ; in which we find that twice ten, and thrice fourteen generations passed between the first and the second Adam; making it clear concerning Christ that he was indeed the son of man.

27 Now these *are* the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat Lot.

28 And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees.

29 And Abram and Nahor took them wives; the name of Abram's wife *was* Sarai; and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah.

30 But Sarai was barren; she *had* no child.

31 And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son,

and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.

32 And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran.

Now concerning Abraham, we have here an account,

1. Of his country, which was Ur of the Chaldees,—an idolatrous place; a place where the generality even of the children of Heber, God's professing people, had woefully backslidden; and having cast off the true God, soon came to own false gods; especially the sun, from which it is supposed this Ur took its name.

2. Of his relations; his father, his brethren, and his wife. His father was Terah, who I doubt was an idolater as well as his neighbours; for Joshua tells the Israelites that *Terah, the father of Abraham, served other gods.* Jos. xxiv. 2. 'Tis no easy matter to swim against the stream,—to be good when all are bad round about us,—to keep oneself untainted from the reigning sin.

Haran died before his father. Death is not tied to the laws of method, nor doth he observe the rule that Joseph did in placing his brethren, taking the firstborn according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth. No: *the shadow of death is without any order.* Job x. 22.

In the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees. Poor Haran died before the converting call came, and before the happy removal of the family out of that idolatrous place; a bad sign that he died in an unchanged state. 'Tis wisdom to make all haste possible out of a sinful state; the state, the land of our nativity; lest death find us there, and send us to a more dismal place, to the unquenchable fire of hell; which will be the everlasting portion of all those that live and die in an unconverted state.

3. Of his departure from Ur of the Chaldees, with his father Terah, and his cousin Lot, to go to the land of Canaan, according to the call of God. This chapter only brings them to Haran or Charran, a town about midway between Ur and Canaan, where they dwelt till the death of Terah, who 'tis likely was disabled by the weakness and infirmities of age from going further, and so fell short of Canaan. Thus all they do that begin well, but do not hold on; that promise much, but perform little; that start fair in a Christian course, but soon loiter and stand still;

that lay their hand to the plough, and then look back, and come to nothing; that get to Charran, and yet fall short of Canaan; that are not far from the kingdom of God, and yet never come thither; the reward being promised to those only that endure to the end. *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.* Rev. ii. 10.

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THE END.







